

GAME PREVIEW
Wisconsin Badgers

MEN'S BASKETBALL
Tai Webster

NU VOLLEYBALL
Cecilia Hall

THE ORIGINAL MAGAZINE DEDICATED TO NEBRASKA ATHLETICS

HUSKERS

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CRAZY EIGHTS

NU improves to 8-1 as defense stifles Purdue, but loss of Ameer stings

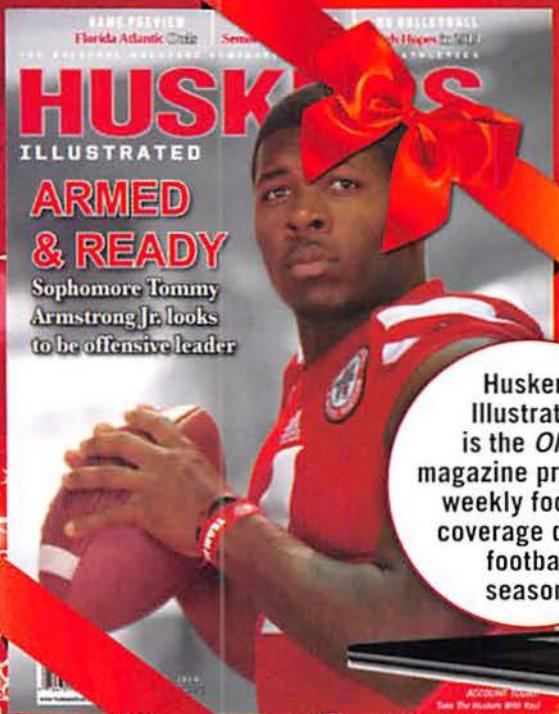


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The next Huskers Illustrated edition, recapping the Wisconsin game and previewing the Minnesota game, will mail on Monday, Nov. 17.



Contents

NOVEMBER 15, 2014 * VOLUME 34 * NO. 14

COLUMNS

4

FROM THE EDITOR

BY DARREN IVY

Nebraska is sitting at 8-1 for just the second time since 2001 and still must face the three other teams who are all vying to represent the West in the Big Ten title game.

22

RECRUITING NOTEBOOK

BY MICHAEL SCHAEFER

Nebraska hosted two wide receiver prospects at the Purdue game on Nov. 1 as it works to secure commitments for its Class of 2015.

23

STATE OF THE HUSKERS

BY MICHAEL BRUNTZ

Will special teams, NU's improved defensive play and the Huskers' defensive line play be enough to carry Nebraska down the stretch run?

FEATURE

14-21

TWO-MINUTE DRILL

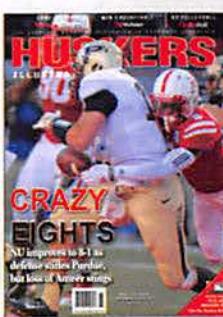
BY LANNY HOLSTEIN & DARREN IVY

Nebraska defensive lineman Kevin Williams has battled through two serious knee injuries to be a big factor this season for the Huskers.

2014 FOOTBALL SCHEDULE

DATE	OPPONENT	SITE	TIME	TV/SCORE
AUG. 30	FLORIDA ATLANTIC	MEMORIAL STADIUM	2:30 P.M.	W. 55-7
SEPT. 6	MCNEESE STATE	MEMORIAL STADIUM	11:00 A.M.	W. 31-24
SEPT. 13	@FRESNOSTATE	FRESNO, CALIF.	9:30 P.M.	W. 55-19
SEPT. 20	MIAMI	MEMORIAL STADIUM	7:00 P.M.	W. 41-31
SEPT. 27	ILLINOIS	MEMORIAL STADIUM	8:00 P.M.	W. 45-14
OCT. 4	@MICHIGAN STATE	EAST LANSING, MICH.	7:00 P.M.	L. 27-22
OCT. 18	@NORTHWESTERN	EVANSTON, ILL.	6:30 P.M.	W. 38-17
OCT. 25	RUTGERS	MEMORIAL STADIUM	11 A.M.	W. 42-24
NOV. 1	PURDUE	MEMORIAL STADIUM	2:30 P.M.	W. 35-14
NOV. 15	@WISCONSIN	MADISON, WIS.	TBA	TBD
NOV. 22	MINNESOTA	MEMORIAL STADIUM	TBA	TBD
NOV. 28	@IOWA	IOWA CITY, IOWA	TBA	TBD
DEC. 6	@BIGTENTITLEGAME	INDIANAPOLIS, IND.	7 P.M.	FOX

ALL GAMES ARE CST



ON THE COVER

Senior Josh Mitchell makes one of his two sacks on Purdue quarterback Austin Appleby. The Huskers were able to pick up their eighth victory on Saturday against the Boilermakers, but it didn't come without an injury to Ameer Abdullah. Without No. 8, the offense struggled to move the ball, but special teams and the defense picked up the slack. NU has a bye before heading to Wisconsin.

PHOTO BY JOE MIXAN/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED

NU ENTERS PIVOTAL STRETCH WITH OR WITHOUT ABDULLAH HUSKERS FACE THREE TEAMS WHO BEAT THEM IN LAST MEETINGS

THE WAY THINGS HAVE PLAYED OUT IN THE BIG TEN WEST DIVISION, THE FIRST NINE GAMES OF THIS SEASON REALLY DON'T MATTER.

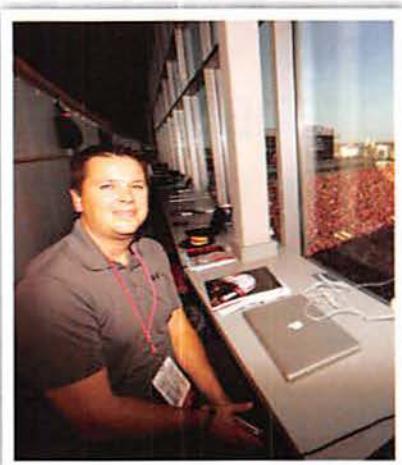
Well, they sort of do or I wouldn't be writing this column. But the road to Indianapolis and the Big Ten title game will come down to which team is playing its best in November with Nebraska (8-1, 4-1 in Big Ten play), Wisconsin (6-2, 3-1), Minnesota (6-2, 3-1) and Iowa (6-2, 3-1) all vying to represent the West. Most importantly, all three teams are still on Nebraska's remaining schedule with road trips to Madison and Iowa City.

"I am [looking forward to it], but I'm also hungry because of what we have at stake in 2014," NU defensive coordinator John Papuchis said after Saturday's 35-14 victory over Purdue. "There are a lot of different ways of looking at these last three games. Obviously, the most important thing at hand is what we have at stake in 2014, knowing that we control our own destiny and that we can get back to Indy and possibly get to where we want to go, ultimately, if we handle our business."

"But we also have to factor in that the last three games that we played, they are teams that got us the last time that we played them. There's all different types of motivation that go out there, but at the end of the day, it's about us executing, take care of our job and getting ourselves ready to play in two weeks."

While the Huskers take this Saturday off with their second bye, Iowa and Minnesota will be jockeying to see which of those teams will still be atop the West standings with Nebraska.

Then comes that much-anticipated trip to Madison for the Big Red. This game has been circled on NU's schedule since the 70-31 embarrassment in the 2012 Big Ten championship game.



In case NU needs further motivation, these seniors can drudge up those feelings of the last time NU traveled to Madison – a 48-17 defeat way back in NU's first ever Big Ten Conference game in 2011.

Offensive coordinator Tim Beck tried to deflect some of those past experiences and point out that what matters is 2014.

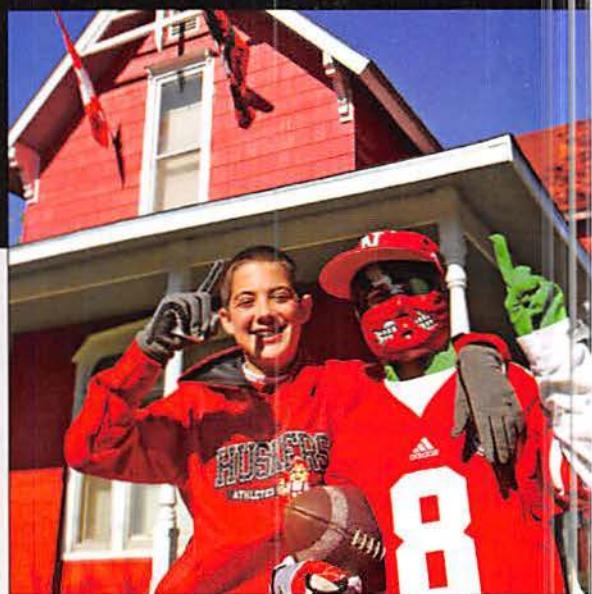
"(Wisconsin) is different with different coaches and stuff," Beck said. "Me, personally, I just want to win. It doesn't really matter who we play. I want our guys to play the way they're coached to play and up to their abilities."

"And when that happens, the results are what they are, but you feel good as a coach that your players go out there and give 110 percent and do everything you ask them to do and they do it with their heart in their hand as hard as they can. That's what you want."

With the do-or-die part of its schedule looming, Nebraska did not want to see its Heisman Trophy contender Ameer Abdullah go down on the second series of the game against Purdue with what trainers are calling a "mild sprain of his MCL."

Head coach Bo Pelini is optimistic Abdullah will be able to play against Wisconsin, but I think young Jack Hoffman pretty much summed up the feeling of Husker Nation when he told ABC that "it sucks" during an in-game interview.

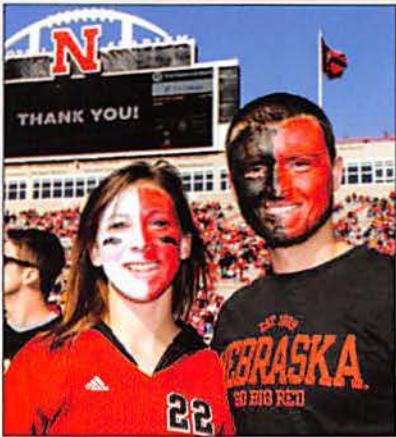
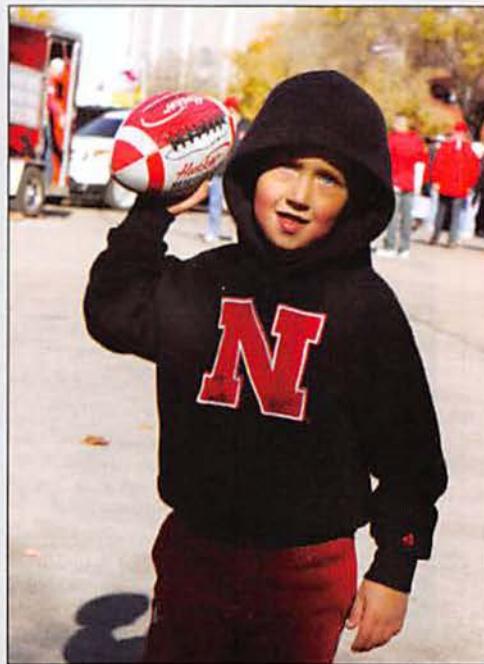
If there is any silver lining, which there really isn't, it is the fact that Nebraska has a bye week. That time will either give Abdullah time to hopefully heal or at least give the Huskers extra time to figure out the rotation with Imani Cross and Terrell Newby, and how to move the ball better than they did against Purdue on Saturday without him on the field. Either way, NU is sitting at 8-1 for just the second time since 2001 and can write its own ending to this season the next four weeks.



Behind the **N**

Cold, costumes greet Purdue crowd

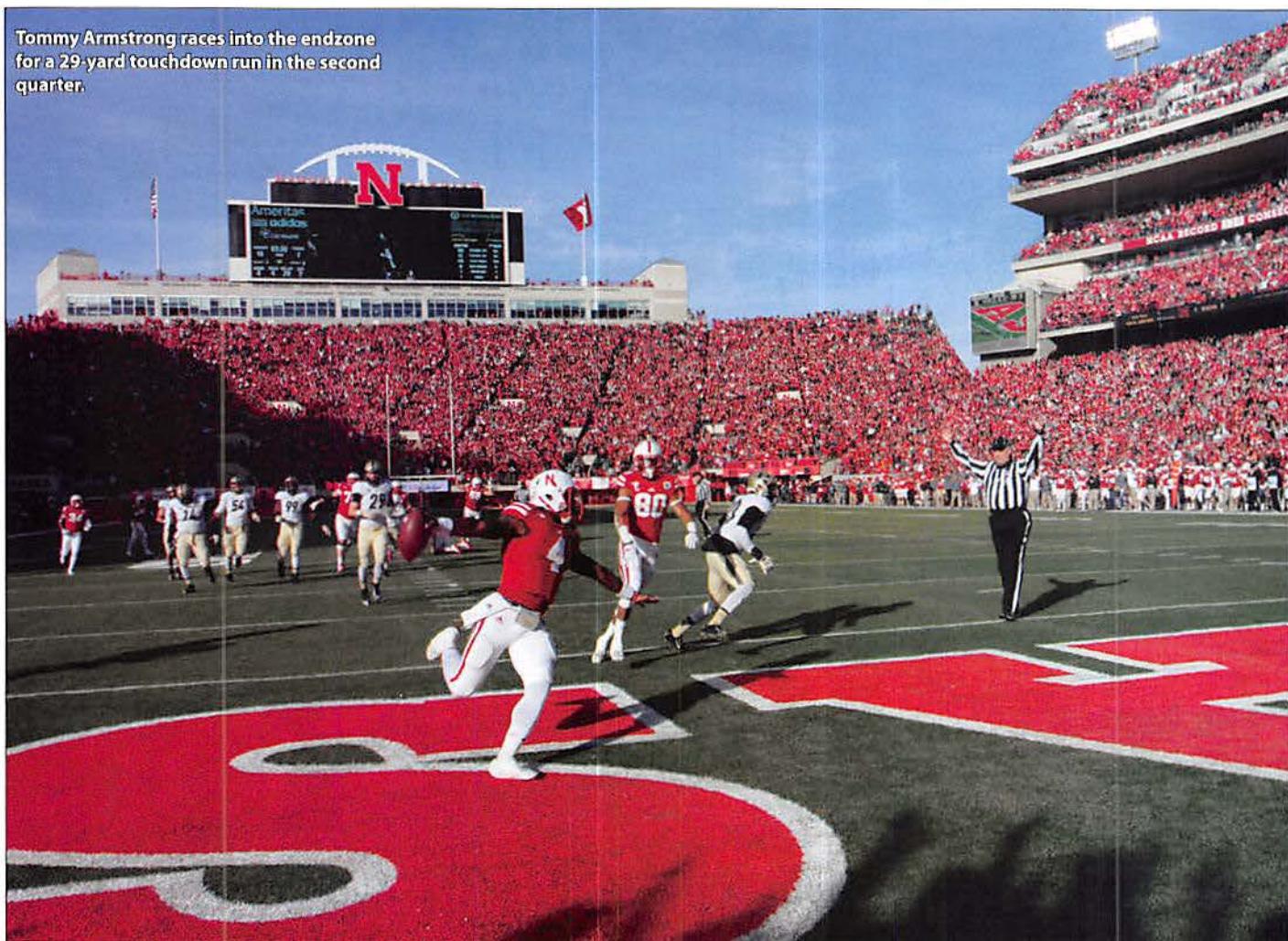
PHOTOS BY JOE MIXAN, JIMMY RASH, MITCH OTTO/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED



Clockwise from bottom left: Senior Emily Cady and the women's basketball team were honored for winning the 2013-14 Big Ten championship. Purdue fans Stan and Jean Flick of Kansas City, Mo. pose with pirate Louis Lopez of Lincoln. From left: Mark Horn, Scott Ngoh, John Weinmaster and Toni Alisandro show their Halloween spirit while trying to get people to park at their house before the game. Ben Larsen and Louis Murph of Papillion pose for a photograph before the game. Michael and Dave Marymee of Fremont braved the cold weather to show their support for Ameer Abdullah. Chase Ehler of Lincoln throws a football before the game. Lloyd McIntyre and his son, Barrett (6), came up from Hastings to enjoy the game against Purdue. Anna Donovan (right) came up with her dad, Bill (left), from Edmond, Oklahoma to visit the campus and take in a game. Husker cheerleader Jen Carlson holds Mackenzie Steffen of West Point. Jessie Drelicharz (left) and Max Johnson (right) came in from Omaha to enjoy the game and show some Husker pride. Pam (left) and Elise (right) Carver from West Des Moines, Iowa pose for a shot before the Purdue game.

Nebraska offense fights through mistakes

Tommy Armstrong races into the endzone for a 29-yard touchdown run in the second quarter.



STORY BY TERRY DOUGLASS | PHOTO BY JOE MIXAN

Following an erratic performance in Saturday's 35-14 victory over Purdue, Nebraska quarterback Tommy Armstrong Jr. clearly wasn't happy with his performance.

Armstrong completed just 8-of-21 pass attempts for 118 yards and a touchdown, and rushed 13 times for 70 yards and another score. Uneven play, three total turnovers and an injury to star I-back Ameer Abdullah combined to hamper Nebraska, which was outgained 340-297 in total offense.

"It was just a lack of communication," Armstrong said of Nebraska's offensive woes. "We practiced the right way, it just didn't show."

"Like I've said each and every week: teams don't stop us, we stop ourselves."

Leading 21-7 at halftime, the Huskers managed just two TDs and 111 yards of

total offense after the intermission. Purdue trailed 28-14 until Nebraska I-back Terrell Newby scored on a seven-yard run with two minutes remaining.

Armstrong pinned the blame for Nebraska's lowest total yardage output of the season on himself. The sophomore signal-caller, who was intercepted three times last season during the Huskers' 44-7 victory at Purdue, was picked off twice more by the Boilermakers.

"That was a little miscommunication, but like I said before, I'm the one with the ball in my hands," Armstrong said. "I have to make the final decision of where I go with the ball."

With a bye week prior to Nebraska's key Nov. 15 conference game at Wisconsin, Armstrong said the he and the Huskers will need to clean several things up. That includes a recent trend of having difficulty with shotgun snaps.

"It all starts off with me," said Armstrong, who fumbled twice, neither of which were lost. "Most people will think of this as a win, but I don't see it that way. I know Purdue is good, but if we keep playing like this, we are going to lose our games. The way that we played, we should have lost. I know we won, but I feel like I failed."

Nebraska I-back Imani Cross, who rushed 20 times for 66 yards and two TDs as Abdullah sat out the majority of the game with a knee sprain, said Armstrong was being too hard on himself.

"The life of a quarterback isn't easy," Cross said. "Miscommunications are going to happen, missed snaps are going to happen, but I think one thing he did well today was stay poised."

"We won the game because Tommy Armstrong was poised. He continued to lead us."

Husker defense clamps down on Purdue

STORY BY TERRY DOUGLASS | PHOTO BY JIMMY RASH

Nebraska continued its recent trend of making life difficult for opposing quarterbacks during a 35-17 home victory over Purdue.

The Cornhuskers limited Boilermakers' quarterback Austin Appleby to an 18-of-46 passing performance for 216 yards with one touchdown and two interceptions. It marked the fifth-consecutive game that the opponent completed less than 50 percent of its pass attempts against the Blackshirts.

"We didn't change our approach at all," said Nebraska safety Nate Gerry, who recorded his team-leading fourth interception in the second quarter. "We just kept doing what we were doing. I feel like we're a really good defense when we just do what we're coached to do and just let our fundamentals take over."

Nebraska defensive coordinator John Papuchis said the defensive line performed well, getting good pressure on Appleby and helping to hold the Boilermakers to 124 yards rushing.

Defensive tackle Maliek Collins finished with a sack and three quarterback hurries, while defensive end Randy Gregory also had three hurries.

"I thought they got after it," Papuchis said of Nebraska's front four. "I don't know if it's always going to reflect in the statistics, but I thought the defensive line controlled the run game and then I thought they got good pressure, even though it didn't always translate into sacks. I didn't think Appleby was ever really comfortable back there."

Cornerback Josh Mitchell had two of Nebraska's three sacks. Papuchis said he was pleased that the Huskers were able to pressure the quarterback using a limited

number of blitzes.

"Most of (Purdue's) explosive gains came off of pressure – when somebody just missed the gap and their two running backs are explosive enough to make you pay," Papuchis said. "We felt like if this (game) turned into base (defense) versus base (offense) with our front four versus their offensive line, we're going to come out on top."

Nebraska's defense was exceptional when it came to getting off the field. Purdue was just 2-of-16 on third-down conversions and 1-of-6 on fourth down.

"I thought we were two plays away from playing a really good football game," Papuchis said. "We were put in some awkward situations. I thought our guys bowed up and never became frustrated. They just answered the bell and kept going and playing. That was a big step today for the defense."



Zaire Anderson and Randy Gregory wrap up Purdue back Akeem Hunt.

NU overcomes mistakes, loss of Abdullah, Huskers will have bye week to fix sloppy play, get healthy

STORY BY LANNY HOLSTEIN | PHOTO BY JOE MIXAN

The tone in the post-game media room was eerily similar to the week before after Nebraska beat Purdue 35-14 Saturday. The Huskers had just come up with a solid win in margin of victory terms, but once again, on the night after Halloween, they looked like they had seen a ghost.

"We're excited to be 8-1 at this point, but we understand that we have a lot to do to finish it off the way we want to finish it off," Nebraska coach Bo Pelini said. "We were sloppy. That's about it."

Most of Nebraska's slop came offensively. When running back Ameer Abdullah came out of the game with a "mild MCL sprain" in the first quarter, the Husker offense sputtered the rest of the game. Pelini was not happy about that.

"If anything it should make them want to rise up and play that much harder and rally around each other when a great player goes out," the coach said. "Let's not read too much into this. At the end of the day, we were sloppy at times. We've got to keep improving. That's what the next two weeks is about for us."

Nebraska has an off week before it heads into the arguably the biggest game left on the regular-season schedule, Wisconsin, and the Huskers will try to avoid making the same mistakes in that game, according to offensive coordinator Tim Beck.

"I thought I might have over-coached them a little bit," Beck said. "I think maybe we showed them a little bit too much stuff. We weren't sure what we were going to get, so we showed them so many things and so many different schemes. I'll take the blame of that."

A year ago, Purdue showed a multitude of different schemes to Nebraska, and this year they've been a flavor of the week defense. That made Nebraska unsure going in, according to Beck.

"We were trying to be prepared for everything versus planning for one thing, and going out and adjusting," he said. "You could kind of see it on our guys. They looked confused at times."



De'Mornay Pierson-El hauls in a touchdown catch in the first quarter.

In Abdullah's absence, Imani Cross and Terrell Newby shared the load at running back. Cross carried 20 times for 68 yards and Newby toted the ball nine times for 42 yards, but their gains weren't enough to keep the heat off of quarterback Tommy Armstrong Jr. The Husker signal-caller completed only eight of his 21 passes for 118 yards and one touchdown, with two interceptions. The difference in the offense without its top weapon was palpable.

"(Ameer's) an electrifying player, a lot like Kenny (Bell), and there are things we do to try and get the ball in his hands," Beck said. "When he's out, you don't really go to those things."

Defensively, Nebraska felt a lot better com-

ing out of the game.

"They threw a lot at us," Pelini said. "But the two touchdowns that they had were on short fields. The second one to me was inexcusable... But there were a lot of good things defensively in that game."

For the second consecutive week, Nebraska got away with a multitude of mistakes and still won handily. That's the good news, according to Pelini, but it's frustrating nonetheless.

"To be honest with you, I don't know if I'm ever really happy," the coach said. "I always know that there's that much more out there for us. I watch the film and I know what I want to see. Myself and the coaches and hopefully the football team, I hope they feel the same way."

RUSHING OFFENSE: It was a strange game for the Huskers who had to make do with Ameer Abdullah after the injury to the senior running back on the second drive of the game. The Huskers utilized Terrell Newby and Imani Cross in his stead, but there wasn't much in the way of big plays or even consistent runs. No running back went over 100 yards, and as an offense the Huskers finished with a less than stellar 179 yards on 51 carries. Nebraska did have success with Tommy Armstrong on a few nicely-timed option runs in the second quarter. Armstrong's big fourth down option keeper resulted in a 29-yard run and the back breaking touchdown that put the Huskers up by two scores before halftime. Most surprisingly was the offense's struggles inside the red zone. Nebraska failed to score on its second possession of the game despite great field position and marching the ball to the two-yard line. The Huskers simply have to get a better push up front from their offensive line in those situations. – Mike Schaefer

C

PASSING OFFENSE: This might be one of the worst passing games in recent memory for Nebraska. Armstrong finished with a paltry 118 yards, completing just eight total passes on the day. Even worse for the Huskers some miscommunication between the quarterback and Jordan Westerkamp led to two interceptions when the receiver ended up running the wrong route. Wide receiver Kenny Bell was rendered a non-factor for the game, finishing with just one five-yard catch. The Huskers weren't able to get Bell involved as Armstrong missed him once when he was wide open and then overthrew the senior receiver a couple other times. It wasn't all bad for the Huskers. Armstrong was sacked only once and had a clean pocket the majority of the time and he connected on one of his best throws of the season with a 17-yard touchdown pass to Demornay Pierson-El to kick off the game's scoring. – Mike Schaefer

D

RUSHING DEFENSE: The key for Nebraska was going to be shutting down Purdue's two-headed running back group of Akeem Hunt and Raheem Mostert. Hunt had to work for his yards, and never showed off the game-breaking speed for which he is known. The one blemish for the Husker run defense came in the second quarter when quarterback Austin Appleby broke free for a 25-yard touchdown run. – Michael Bruntz

A-

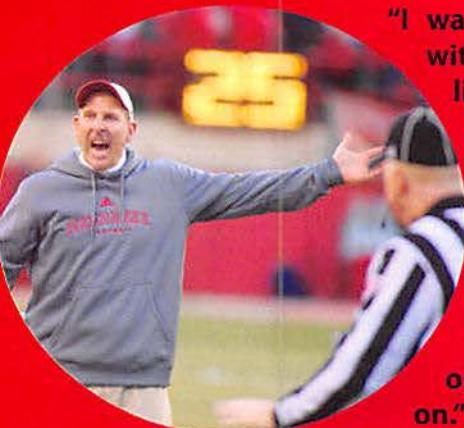
PASSING DEFENSE: Purdue came into the game wanting to use the waggle and rollout game that had stung Nebraska's defense in past games, but the Huskers were able to sniff those out relatively well. Appleby completed fewer than half his passes, and the ones he did complete were nice catches by Purdue's wide receivers. Nebraska allowed a late touchdown pass on a broken play, but one of the big concerns was a lack of consistent pressure by the Husker front four. – Michael Bruntz

B+

KICKING/SPECIAL TEAMS: Nebraska's special teams took over the first quarter and should have given Nebraska an easy roadmap to ending this game early. Kieron Williams and Brandon Reilly teamed up early to block a Purdue punt, and with Purdue punting into the wind, freshman DeMornay Pierson-El nearly took a punt return to the house. Nebraska didn't take an offensive snap in its own territory until the 4:25 mark of the first quarter. On top of that, Reilly blocked a punt later in the game to give Nebraska more solid field position. – Michael Bruntz

A

Quoting Nebraska head coach Bo Pelini on a couple of the calls during the game:



"I was confused, to be honest with you [on the unsportsman-like conduct penalty]. [What I am confused about is] between me and league office because I'll be talking to somebody here as quickly as I possibly can. [The play clock penalty in the first quarter] is another one that I was very confused on."

Game Notes

ANOTHER PICK FOR GERRY

Nebraska safety Nate Gerry came down with a diving interception near the end of the first half, giving him a pick in four of the Huskers' last five games.

Purdue had a receiver breaking open on a post route, and Gerry turned on the jets from his perch at the back end of the Nebraska defense to get in front of the ball as it neared the receiver in the back of the end zone.

"I thought he made a great play," Nebraska defensive coordinator John Papuchis said. "He's our back-side hang player. He's the one who's supposed to be the backstop for our defensive backs if they run a post route, and he was where he was supposed to be and made a play on the ball."

It looked as though Gerry might have been a step behind when the ball came out of Purdue quarterback Austin Appleby's hand, but his speed allowed him to close the gap.

"Nate's a fast kid, and that's why is role is back there as deep as their deepest route," Papuchis said.

If Gerry is able to make another interception against Wisconsin, he will tie Troy Watchorn and Josh Bullocks for the school record for consecutive games with an interception.

BLOCKING PUNTS

Nebraska's punt blocking team got back into the swing of things for the first time since playing Penn State a year ago. Brandon Reilly, who was the last man to get in front of one, teamed up with true freshman Kieron Williams to get a pair against the Boilermakers.

After a three-and-out to start the game, Reilly and Williams both broke through the line and had a shot at Thomas Meadows' punt. Kieron Williams ended up getting it with his face.

"Yeah. It was pretty much my whole face," he said. "It got a little bit of my arm, but it was pretty much my face."

Later, in the second quarter, Reilly got his chance, partially blocking another Purdue offering. The Huskers obviously had watched some film on the Boilermakers, and knew the tendencies going in.

"We thought we had an opportunity to get some in terms of the way that they protect," Nebraska defensive coordinator John Papuchis, who is heavily involved in special teams, said. "Basically, it's not splitting any atoms, they don't block the edge guy. If you can get there in seven steps or less, in less than two seconds, you have a chance."

The lone loser, from a Nebraska perspective on those punt blocks was the Husker deep man, DeMornay Pierson-El, who had a couple chances to return kicks taken away from him on those plays.

"He was joking about it," Williams said of Pierson-El. "He wished that we would stop blocking them,

Nate Gerry makes an interception for the third-consecutive game against Purdue.



MITCH OTTO/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED

so he could get the ball, and we told him that when it is time to turn around and block, we will do that to get him in the end zone."

PELINI MAD AT OFFICIALS

Nebraska coach Bo Pelini's been able to keep a low profile much of 2014, but his old nemesis, the officials, had him riled up once again on Saturday.

The coach received a 15-yard, unsportsmanlike conduct penalty in the fourth quarter when asking for an explanation on a fumble recovery judgment. The call actually went his way on the play, but Pelini said he was confused about it after the game.

"That's between me and league office because I'll be talking to somebody here as quickly as I possibly can," the coach said.

Pelini wouldn't speak in much detail of the incident, probably trying to avoid a fine, but a tweet from former Nebraska wide receiver Quincy Enunwa seemed to put the coach's feelings into words. Enunwa's tweet, presumably reading the coach's lips, read, "I'm gonna make sure you lose your job – Bo Pelini. Lmao gotta love him."

ABDULLAH INJURED EARLY ON

Nebraska running back Ameer Abdullah went down with a knee injury in the first quarter of Nebraska's game with Purdue Saturday. The stud runner's status was the talk of the press room following the win.

"I think Ameer just has a mild sprain and a little bit of a bruise on the side where he got hit," coach Bo Pelini said. "We're very opti-

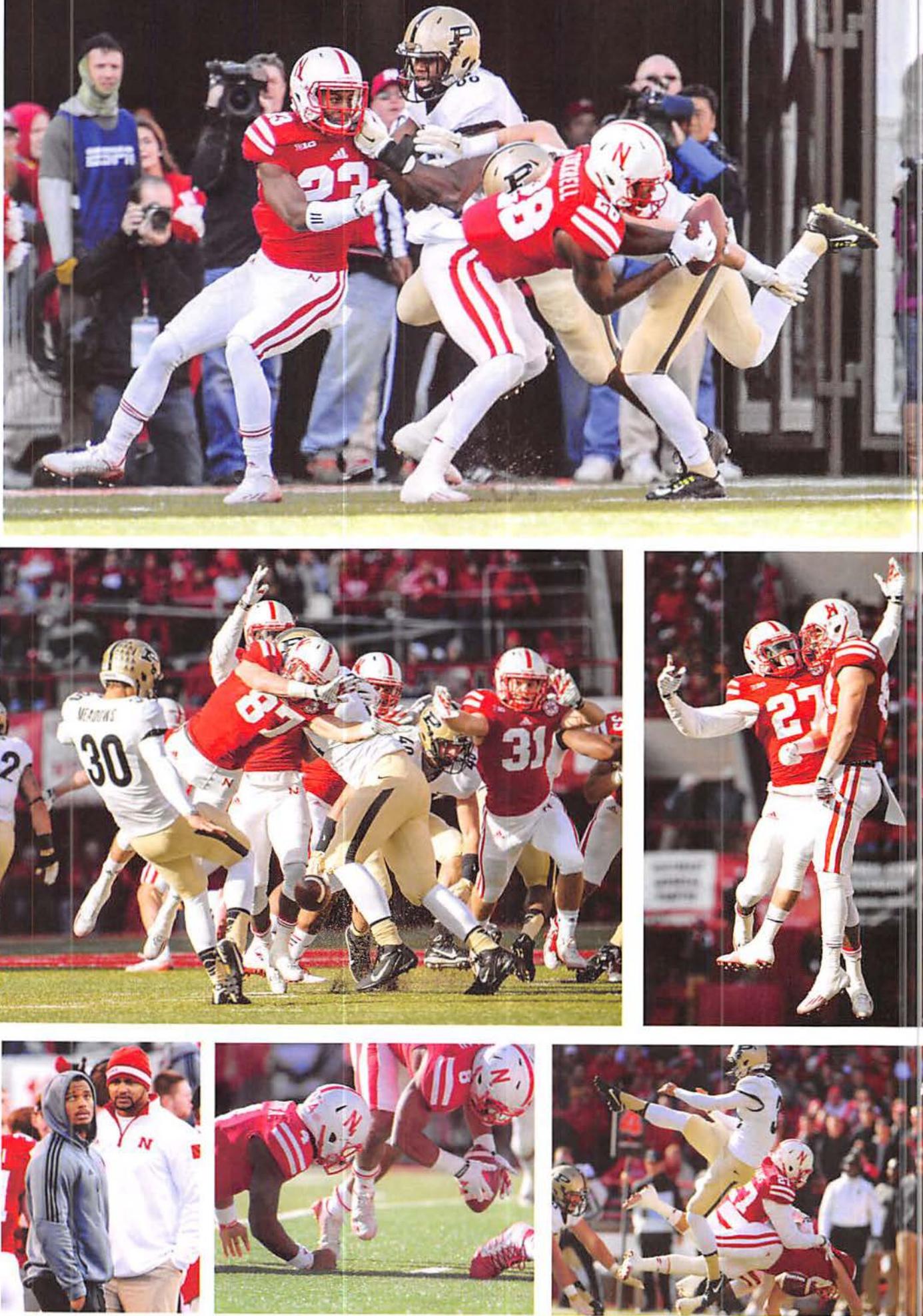
mistic there. The official word was a "mild MCL sprain" from the Nebraska media relations department, a very similar injury to the one running back Rex Burkhead suffered a year ago. Asked if Abdullah could have come back in the game after being checked by the trainers, Pelini said "no."

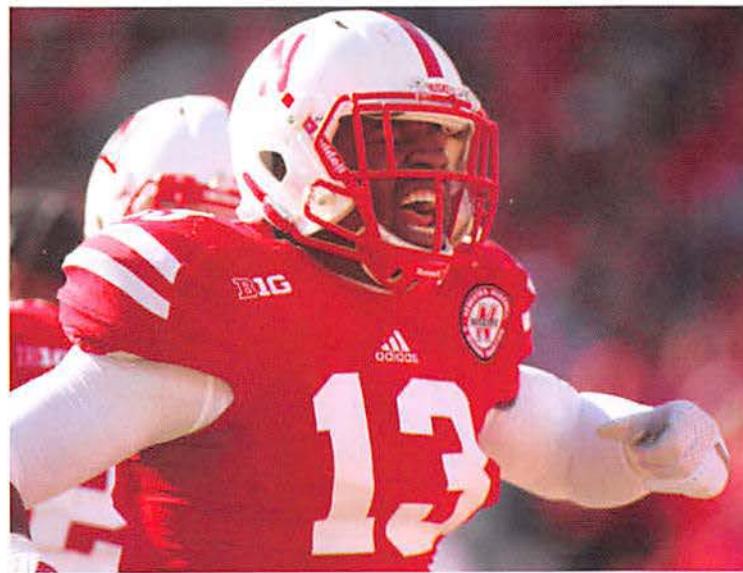
"If he could've, he would've," the coach said. "We were going to be cautious with him. We were going to do everything we needed to do to make sure we were doing the right thing by Ameer. He already had an MRI and we feel good about where he is."

Will he be back in a couple weeks against Wisconsin?

"I'm optimistic about that, yeah," Pelini said. "But I can't say for sure, and I don't know that."

FINAL SCORE: NEBRASKA 35, PURDUE 14



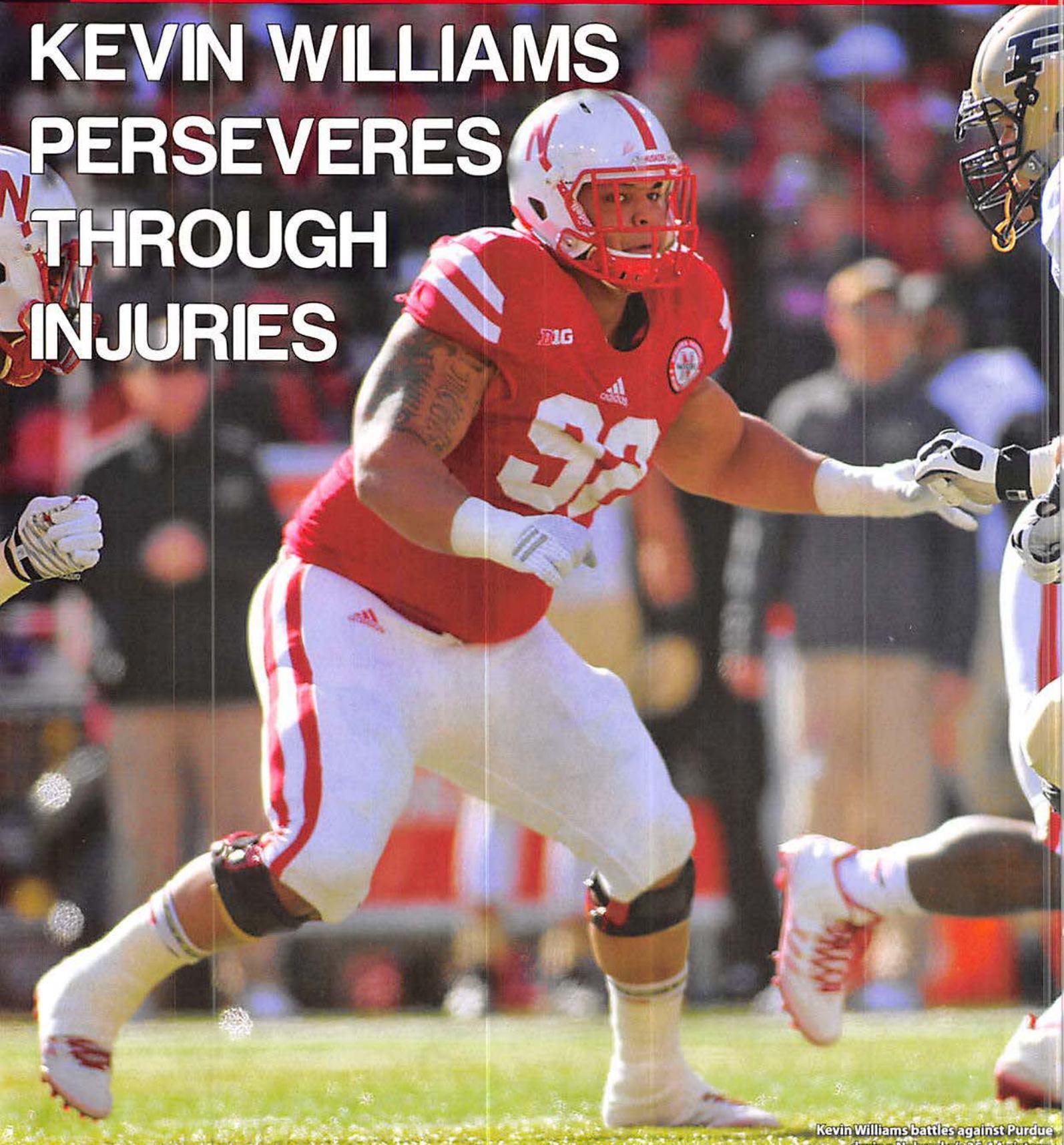


CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE: ZAIRE ANDERSON CELEBRATES A BIG STOP AGAINST PURDUE. GREG McMULLEN DEFLECTS A PASS ATTEMPT BY AUSTIN APPLEBY. KIERON WILLIAMS AND BRANDON REILLY CONVERGE ON NU'S FIRST BLOCKED PUNT. AMEER ABDULLAH PICKS UP A FUMBLE AND GETS STOPPED SHORT ON FOURTH DOWN, ULTIMATELY INJURING HIS KNEE ON THE PLAY. ABDULLAH WAS IN STREET CLOTHES THE SECOND HALF. BRANDON REILLY BLOCKS A SECOND PUNT. REILLY AND WILLIAMS CELEBRATE THE BLOCK. BYERSON COCKRELL MAKES AN INTERCEPTION, BUT THEN FUMBLES IT BACK TO PURDUE. IMANI CROSS EYES THE ENDZONE, WHICH HE FOUND TWICE AGAINST THE BOILERMAKERS.

PHOTOS BY JOE MIXAN & JIMMY RASH

2 Minute Drill

KEVIN WILLIAMS
PERSEVERES
THROUGH
INJURIES



Kevin Williams battles against Purdue during Nebraska's 35-14 victory.

By Darren Ivy and Lanny Holstein

Nebraska defensive tackle Kevin Williams worried if the coaches were going to give up on him.

The junior from Holland, Ohio suffered his second season-ending knee injury in less than three years last fall camp, and he wasn't sure if Bo Pelini and staff would have the patience to keep putting him back in the mix after he came back.

"I was hoping they're not going to think that I'm just a broken record, a broken soldier," Williams said. "I was hoping that they would continue to have faith in me, and they have. They never thought that I was going through too much or didn't have faith in me."

Williams was sidelined initially in 2011 when he tore his ACL in a surprise scrimmage. He didn't wear a knee brace for the practice because he felt it would slow him down, and it cost him. Then back in fall camp a year ago, he tore the ligament in his other knee, this time wearing a brace on the bad knee but not on the good one.

These days Williams never takes the field without a brace on each knee. There's no reason to take the risk, he said, and the supports haven't seemed to slow him down. Through the first eight games, Williams had 2.5 sacks and six tackles for loss, kind of becoming a big play man.

He isn't one to look at the numbers much, preferring to look at his one-on-one battles with offensive linemen as the determinant of his success, but he does have one gripe with that stat line: the 2.5 sacks.

"I don't like that. I think that's dumb," he said. "Against Northwestern, I had the guy wrapped up bringing him down, and then Jack (Gangwish) came in and took half my sack. I was like 'good job, bro, but dang.' I think they should give the sack to the first guy and a half to the second guy."

The book keepers will have to mull that one over for Williams, but in all seriousness, the defensive tackle is just grateful he has any sacks at all after sitting out so long.

"It's been a heck of an experience, something that I've been dreaming about since I was a little kid," Williams said. "Just being able to go out there and do it is something that I've been missing in my life. I haven't been able to do it since high school, so that feeling of self-satisfaction is great. You can't get those emotions anywhere else."

It's been a long road for Williams even just this season to get on the field. He got banged up a bit in fall camp this year but is fully healthy now. When Vincent Valentine went down against Northwestern, Williams filled the void with a monster game.

"I like to spark the guys up on defense," he said of that game. "If I make a play it starts trickling down, and you have Maliek (Collins) getting a sack and Nate Gerry catching a pick, all these guys stepping up. It's a chain reaction down the line."

There is one positive to Williams situation. Because he wasn't busy playing much of the past three seasons, he's spent his time wisely in the classroom and has already earned his undergraduate degree in construction management.

Williams is taking graduate classes now and in a lighter load. In fact he's only enrolled in two serious classes. His third is a bowling class he took for the fun of it.

"You just bowl, and (the teacher) teaches you how to keep score, but mostly he's just like 'go ahead.' We play little games and stuff," Williams said. "It's fun, man."

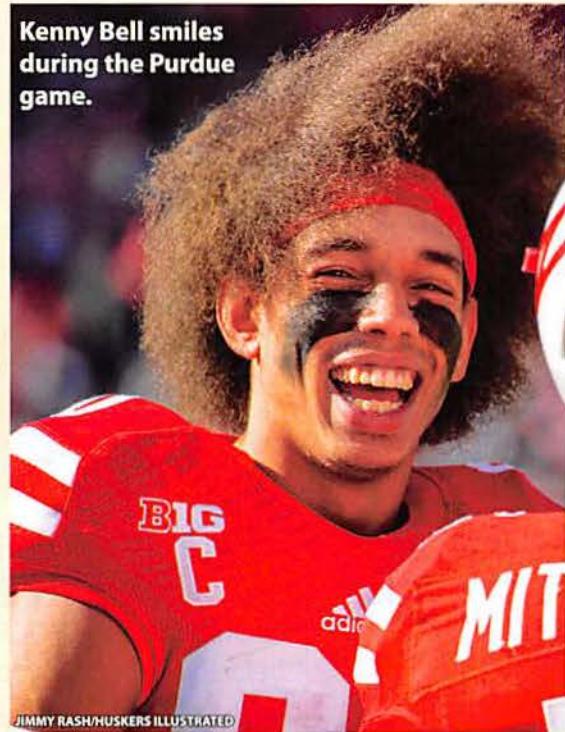
Williams is in high spirits. He's back on the field, and his classroom load is light, so he can focus on football. It's been a long road for the junior, but maybe it's for the better.

"I feel like I've matured a lot since I've been here," he said. "When

HI'S TOP 5

NEBRASKA CAREER RECEIVING YARDS

Kenny Bell smiles during the Purdue game.



1 JOHNNY RODGERS - WINGBACK
2,479 (1970-72)

2 KENNY BELL - WIDE RECEIVER
2,478 (2011-14)

3 NATE SWIFT - WIDE RECEIVER
2,476 (2005-08)

4 TERENCE NUNN - WIDE RECEIVER
1,762 (2004-07)

5 TODD PETERSON - WIDE RECEIVER
1,602 (2005-08)

Coming into the Purdue game, it seemed a given that senior wide receiver Kenny Bell would move into first place on the all-time career yardage charts at Nebraska. However, Bell had just one reception for five yards against Purdue and finds himself one yard behind Johnny Rodgers. Unless Bell has a catch for negative yards against Wisconsin, his next reception should give him the yardage record, along with the career receptions record he already owns.

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*Android 2.2 or higher with Flash required. Not compatible with all devices.

I got here, I was a young-minded freshman that only wanted to hang out and have fun. These past couple years, I've noticed that it's time to get down to business."

PELINI SEEING "FRESH" FACES AT PRACTICE

One of the big preseason storylines surrounding the Nebraska football program was the use of shortened practices. A year ago, the team routinely went over two hours on the field each weekday. This season it's a lot closer to an hour and a half.

"I don't know how much the team reps and things have changed. It's not that much different, but we've cut through some of the walk-thrus and things like that, which probably cuts off somewhere in the neighborhood of a half hour a day," Nebraska coach Bo Pelini said. "Our practices are usually right around 90 minutes."

The idea was to freshen the team up down the stretch, keep the legs underneath the players in November. Well, we're in November now, and Pelini said he's starting to see the effects.

"I think if you ask the players, they would tell you yes," he said. "I think it's been a good schedule. I wasn't sure going in how I was going to like it, and I like it for a lot of different reasons. But yeah, I think we are a little bit fresher."

Pelini has always been a proponent of long, instructive practices, but he said he reevaluated that approach this off-season. Aided with some GPS data, the coach determined that his players were running around too much and not getting the most efficiency out of their workouts a year ago.

This year the practices are shorter, more efficient, and a lot of the instruction is still part of the deal – it just comes in the film room now. The level of teaching is the same, but the



Maliek Collins chases down Rutgers quarterback Gary Nova for a sack.

JIMMY RASH/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED

level of physical and mental strain is down.

"You know, what people forget is that these kids have full class schedules and whatever else going on," Pelini said. "It can be not just a physical grind, but a mental grind. The fresher you can keep them, the better off you are. Sometimes it's as much a mental thing as it is a physical thing."

COLLINS NOT UNDER THE RADAR ANY LONGER

Defensive tackle Maliek Collins didn't get the hype some other players of his ability did coming out of college, but the Nebraska coaching staff saw through that.

"We thought he was really talented right from the get go,"

Nebraska coach Bo Pelini said. "He's a guy who wrestled. He was a big, explosive, talented athlete who was raw, which most guys are at that age. I thought there was a very high end to him... We hit that one right."

Through the Rutgers game, Collins had amassed 24 tackles – eight for loss, including one sack – numbers that have turned some heads across Big Ten country.

When the All-Big Ten teams come out at the end of the season, the mild mannered kid from Kansas City might have opposing coaches wishing they had knocked on his door instead of Nebraska.

"Sometimes it's the area of the country you're in. I don't

know," Pelini said of why Collins flew under the radar. "He came from a school that wasn't known as a football powerhouse. Coach (John) Garrison does a great job doing his homework down there in the Kansas City area and identifying him."

That's one of the keys to recruiting successfully, according to Pelini. You have to find those diamonds in the rough that other teams are skipping over.

"You know, all you have to do is look at the draft every year across the country," Pelini said. "It doesn't really matter what you're ranked, there's a lot of good football players out there. You just have to do a good job of identifying them."

Mike Moudy leads a running play during the Rutgers game earlier this season.



1-on-1 with Mike Moudy

Story By LANNY HOLSTEIN • *Photo By* JOE MIXAN

What does it mean when to you as an offensive linemen that Ameer Abdullah is approaching and breaking all these records?

"Oh, it's a huge source of pride. I mean that's our guy. His success is our success, it's directly related to how well we're blocking. We take immense pride in that. I couldn't be more happy for him."

He's been getting all these awards. Does he take you guys out to dinner or anything like that?

"No. I'm about to start calling him out on it, but I figure if down the road, at the end of the season, he'll be able to do that."

Do defenses do anything special to combat you running game?

"They up their blitz percentage against us. That's what teams do when you are running the ball on them. When they find out they can't stop the run, they are going to start throwing blitzes at you. That's nothing we haven't seen. We just have to be prepared for it."

Is that something that they put in the game plan specifically for you?

"I wouldn't say they do it right from the get go, but once they find out that we have a slash 'em and gash 'em back that you can't really stop from your base front, they a

start throwing stuff at us. That's just experience and coaching. They are going to start throwing blitzes at us to stop the run. The percentage picks up. That's just how it's played out this season."

Is it a different kind of blitz? Usually, you hear the word blitz, and you are thinking about a pass rush.

"Not really. It's the blitzes that we've watched on film. It's just that they are more frequent. I would say out of every three or four plays, they will blitz once or twice. They'll up it, but you never know."

So it's more of a curveball being thrown at you?

"Yeah. Sometimes you'll catch an offensive linemen off guard with a blitz, he won't pick it up and your back will get hit in the backfield. That's kind of what they're going for. They're trying to throw that 8-ball at us."

That has to be tough if the guy you are supposed to block isn't there, right?

"It's tough in the sense that you don't know it's coming, but there's tells everywhere. I mean, you can look at safeties, you can look at backers, you can look at depth and width, just all that random stuff. If you play with your eyes up, there's tells. It's all

good."

How good are you guys at making that read?

"We're pretty good. We have practice, and every three of four plays, they'll throw a blitz at you. They won't tell you it coming, but if you are looking for those tells, looking for those keys, you go from there."

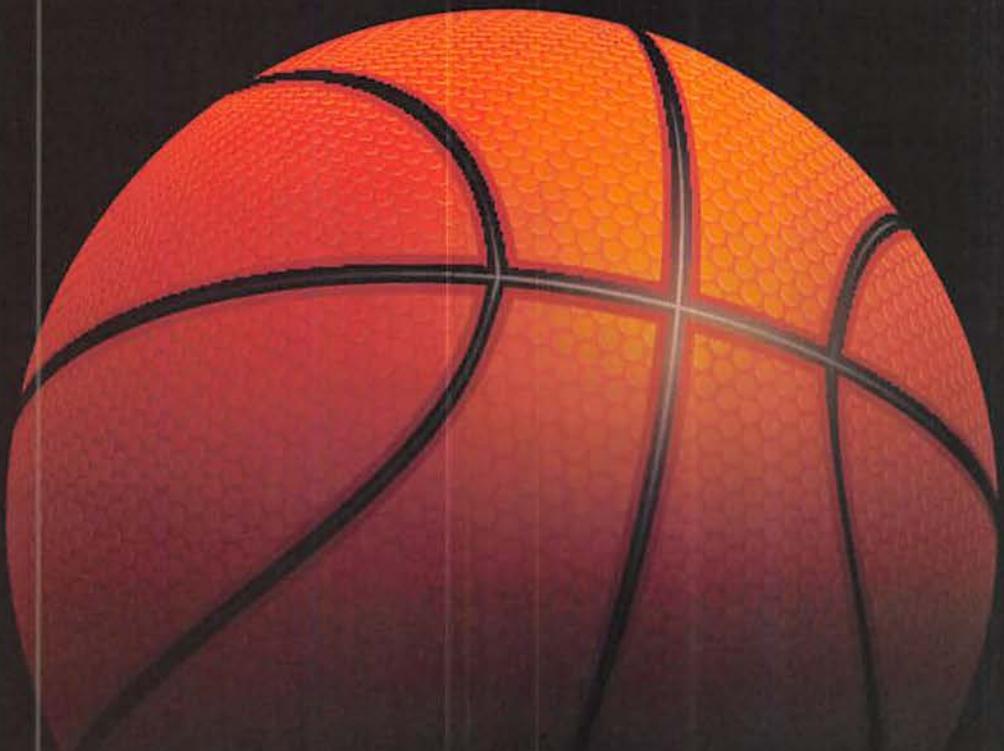
What's it been like moving around from right to left guard at times this year?

"It's just a different stance, but I'm comfortable with both hands down. I'm trying to work on that, so there's more versatility. You never know what will happen with that, if I will be getting more reps on the left or the right. It's good to be prepared for whatever you can do. I can give Jake (Cotton) a spell and get Chongo (Kondolo) more reps, so it works well for us."

It seems like Chongo, Ryne Reeves, Givens Price and a few others have given you guys a nice rotation.

"Oh, absolutely. When we have seven or eight guys playing, it makes all the difference. No. 1, with our GPS units, the numbers are a little bit lower, so you are more rested, fresh going every two series. You are out there 15-20 plays max, so your body is feeling good. That plays a big part in how you finish a game."

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Defensive backs coach Charlton Warren instructs his players during a practice.



DARREN IVY/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED

PRAISE FOR WARREN

Nebraska secondary Coach Charlton Warren wasn't in the room, but he probably smiled when he heard the way his head coach spoke of him this past Monday at weekly Husker football press conference.

"I think he's a tremendously talented coach," Pelini said. "He's very detailed in his coaching and does a great job. This isn't an easy system to come in and have the head coach looking over your shoulder all the time, especially at that position."

Pelini was a safety in his college days at Ohio State and has spent time as a linebackers coach in the NFL, so he considers himself a "backend guy." That means his input is always there for Warren, but the head man said he's been impressed with his newest hire's ability to handle things himself.

"It's not like he picked it up

overnight. It took some time to work on his part," Pelini said. "We spent a lot of time together in the off-season and in the meeting room during spring ball, throughout fall camp. I think he gets more comfortable in what we're doing every day. He really gives a lot of valuable input. He's a really talented coach. Really talented."

BONDI BACK SOON

Freshman Drew Brown is option one, two and three at kicker these days, but that may not be the case for much longer. Mauro Bondi is nearing recovery from a broken clavicle he suffered in a motorcycle accident the week of the Miami football game.

He should be back this week, according to Nebraska Coach Bo Pelini.

"Yes, I would anticipate it," he said. "Mauro will be back if not this week, then probably

for the Wisconsin game."

The job will remain with Brown, at least in the short term, but Bondi will be given every chance to get back into the swing of things.

"We'll see once he comes back how he feels health-wise," Pelini said. "But yeah, if he can get up to the level he was at before he got hurt."

AMEER GETTING DISRESPECTED?

Nebraska running back Ameer Abdullah is smashing records left and right, but some national publications like ESPN and CBS Sports don't have him in the top five of their Heisman polls. It's irritating to a lot of Husker fans as well as coach Bo Pelini.

"Does it bug me? Yeah, it does a little bit," he said. "I could talk for half an hour on that whole situation and how that goes. That's not just this

year, but year after year. I take that with a little bit of a grain of salt. I mean just watch the film. That's all you've got to do."

HUSKERS CLIMB TO NO. 14 IN COACHES POLL

Despite an uneven performance in a 35-14 win over Purdue on Saturday, Nebraska climbed in the USA Today Amway Coaches Poll.

Nebraska moved up from No. 16 to No. 14 in the poll, thanks in part to losses by Georgia and Arizona, two teams who had previously been ranked in front of Nebraska.

The Huskers were one of four Big Ten teams ranked this week, joining Michigan State (6), Ohio State (11) and Wisconsin, who re-entered the poll at No. 24.

Nebraska has a bye week this coming weekend, before taking on Wisconsin in Madison.



RECRUITING NOTEBOOK

BY MICHAEL SCHAEFER
RECRUITING EDITOR
HUSKERSILLUSTRATED.COM

Huskers look to land '15 wide receivers

Nebraska hosted two more receivers on Saturday during the Purdue game. While most fans might focus on defensive end or on linebacker, wide receiver has quietly become a big need for the Huskers who will lose Kenny Bell after the season and might lose Jamal Turner as well. Following Bell, NU has only one reliable target with Jordan Westerkamp. Nebraska needs to get more from other receivers in the program – or it needs to land a player or two that can help on the outside and stretch the field for Tommy Armstrong.

Here's a look at the top four receivers on Nebraska's board at this time:

Tony Brown – The first to schedule his visit for the Purdue weekend, Brown is a good sized receiver at 6-foot-1, 175 pounds and he's still growing into his frame. More importantly, Brown's senior film shows a blazing receiver with a good idea what to do with the ball after he secures it in his hands. While not huge, Brown can still stretch the field with his speed and more importantly, he's shown a good ability to get himself open with nice routes.

Brown is the definition of a late bloomer and the kind of recruit the Huskers love to go after when it hits fall. He did receive a summer offer but that was almost a placeholder as Rich Fisher wanted to see the senior film before Nebraska would really be all the way in. Just as important to Nebraska, Brown's family was with him this weekend to experience Lincoln and the visit. There's no doubt the Huskers pulled out all the stops to get Brown to say yes, before heading back to California.

A.D. Miller – A big, towering wide receiver, A.D. Miller is a target that the Huskers have been after since the spring when the initial offer came. All teams are enamored with Miller's size. The receiver is a natural red zone threat and has a great frame for adding weight and developing into a good blocker as well.

The Huskers brought Miller in for the Purdue game and the Illinois commit has wanted to get to Lincoln for some time. A flip is not imminent for the receiver but there's no question that with Tim Beckman on the hot seat, Nebraska is positioning itself well for the wide receiver.

Nebraska would have liked to add an outside receiver and only Tavin Richardson has the size that Miller can boast of right now. The Huskers know the value of a big red zone threat with the great success Quincy Enunwa enjoyed at the end of his career.

Stanley Morgan – The Huskers could get good news from Morgan by the end of the week. The wide receiver is expected to announce his decision and the Huskers have put themselves in great position for the New Orleans area receiver.

Morgan visited Nebraska for the Illinois game at the end of September. The receiver had a great visit and really enjoyed his time on the campus and got to know Nebraska commit Nekyle Lundie. Morgan spent a lot of time with assistant Rich Fisher, who has done a lot of the heavy lifting for Nebraska's recruiting in New Orleans.

The receiver is a good talent. A three-star, as rated by 247Sports, Morgan has had a big senior season, using his speed to separate himself from the defense. Even though he's not real tall, Morgan can stretch the field with his speed

and he'll force safeties to go with him, clearing out the area underneath.

Tavin Richardson – The toughest for the Huskers to land, Richardson is at the top of the team's board right now. The receiver from South Carolina has great size at 6-feet-3, and he's got a good relationship with Fisher, who immediately went out to see Richardson during Nebraska's last bye week.

Richardson plays for an elite high school program and fully understands that his role at Nebraska, if he chooses to play for the Huskers, would entail being a red zone threat and helping control the perimeter in the blocking game. He acknowledged as much when he watched the Huskers run the ball at Miami often during his official visit.

The problem facing Nebraska is that Kentucky is an overwhelming favorite and it appears that UCF might be higher than NU as well at this point. The Huskers will keep chasing Richardson, but it might have to settle with a different receiver in the class. **N**

Question marks surround Huskers as they face three main contenders

BY MICHAEL BRUNTZ

LET THE KEY GAMES BEGIN.

Nebraska wrapped up an effective, but unspectacular 35-14 win over Purdue on Saturday night and now faces a bye week before the key stretch of its regular season. What the 2014 Nebraska football team ultimately becomes, will be decided over the next four weeks.

During that stretch, the Huskers face a road game at Wisconsin, a home game against Minnesota and close the regular season with a trip to Iowa. That's three physical, conference matchups that will determine if Nebraska goes back to Indianapolis or falls short. November is often when the storybook is written each season for teams, and Nebraska will be no exception.

There are certainly questions ahead. Chief among them have to do with the health of Ameer Abdullah, who left Saturday's game with a knee injury. Nebraska needs Abdullah to be as close to 100 percent as possible down the stretch. Though Abdullah's injury gave Nebraska's win a bit of a sour note, there are reasons to feel good about where Nebraska is nine games into the season.

Can Nebraska return to Indy?

Here are three reasons to feel bullish about the Huskers chances.

Special Teams: Long an afterthought in terms of its effect on the game for Nebraska, the Huskers suddenly look like one of the more scary special teams units in the Big Ten. Yes, DeMornay Pierson-El has brought electricity to the punt return game, and is a threat to take a punt to the house at any point, but Nebraska added a new wrinkle to its arsenal on Saturday against Purdue, blocking two punts in the win. Nebraska's dedication to fixing its special teams issues in spring practice and fall camp is paying dividends in a bigger way – field position. The Huskers are winning the field position battle this year in a way they haven't done in previous years. On Saturday against Purdue, Nebraska didn't take an offensive snap in its own territory until the 4:25 mark of the first quarter. That kind of field position advantage can be huge in a close game, which Nebraska will see over the next three games.

Interior Line Play: The next three games will challenge Nebraska's defense in ways that it hasn't necessarily been challenged to this point. All three teams – Wisconsin, Minnesota and Iowa – are going to come off the bus trying to run the ball down Nebraska's throat, then test the Huskers' discipline with play action passing. One of the things that Nebraska has at its disposal, that if might not have been able to say in years past, is Nebraska's interior run defense.



Can Nebraska return to Indy? Here are three reasons to feel bullish about the Huskers' chances: Special Teams, Interior Line Play and Defensive Improvement.

Maliek Collins and Vincent Valentine have been dominant inside, and then when you factor in Kevin Williams and Kevin Maurice, Nebraska has four players who can be interior run stoppers against three very good running teams. Williams said after Nebraska's win over Purdue that the Huskers have noticed opponents going out of their way to run the ball to the outside because the defensive tackles have done such a good job of plugging the middle. Expect Nebraska's opponents to test the middle, but also expect the Huskers to be ready to what's ahead.

Defensive Improvement: Nebraska hasn't seen the best offenses in the Big Ten over the last few weeks, but make no mistake, the Nebraska defense is an improving and confident group. The Blackshirts – we can call them that now that the black practice uniforms have officially been handed out – are among the nation's best at getting off the field on third down, and have been forcing turnovers with enough regularity that Nebraska's turnover margin has been about even all season. Though the Huskers continue to rotate a bit at the linebacker spot, this is a defense that knows its identity and is playing with a little bit of attitude of late. With two of the next three coming on the road, Nebraska's defense is going to have to provide some of the spark for this team. **N**

Read daily Husker reports from

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Scouting Report



Wisconsin Badgers

Wisconsin will face Purdue before hosting key home contest with Cornhuskers Nov. 15 1 DOUG GRIFFITHS

Wisconsin is surging.

The Badgers have crushed their last two opponents – Maryland and Rutgers – by a combined 89-7.

Wisconsin will travel to Purdue before hosting Nebraska on Nov. 15 and it will head to West Lafayette sporting a 6-2 overall record, including 3-1 in the Big Ten.

The Badgers have won three in a row and as a result of put themselves in position to win their fourth Big Ten championship in the last five years.

ONE-MAN WRECKING CREW

What else is new?

Wisconsin has one of the nation's best running backs. It seems like we've been able to say that for years.

Melvin Gordon is the Badgers' marquee

player and is yet another one of Wisconsin's talented backs in what has become a program that produces top-shelf running backs year after year.

Gordon has rushed for 3,624 yards in his three-year Wisconsin career. That ranks as the seventh-best ever in Big Ten history.

Wisconsin got a slight scare in the fourth quarter at Rutgers when Gordon tweaked a knee, but after the game Badger head coach Gary Andersen said he was fine.

BADGERS DO RUN, RUN, RUN

It's no secret how much Wisconsin loves to run the football.

Against Rutgers the Badgers had 298 yards rushing.

In its last six games, Wisconsin has

THE VITALS

WHAT: #17 Nebraska @ Wisconsin

WHEN/WHERE: Nov. 15. Kickoff TBA in Madison, Wis. (Camp Randall Stadium)

TV: TBD

RADIO: The Husker Sports Network broadcasts the action to 27 statewide radio markets. KFAB (1110 AM) serves as the Omaha affiliate and KLIN (1400 AM) serves as the Lincoln affiliate, while KRVN (880 AM) is a third affiliate that reaches around the state. Join Greg Sharpe (play-by-play), Matt Davison (color and co-hosts Husker Game Day Pregame Show), Lane Grindle (sideline/post-game, co-hosts Husker Game Day), Steve Taylor (co-hosts Husker Game Day Show and Big Red Reaction Show) and Matt Coatey (hosts Big Red Reaction Show and helps anchor postgame studio coverage) for all the action. The game can also be heard live on Huskers.com and SIRIUS Satellite Radio.

COACHES: Nebraska: Bo Pelini (66-25 overall, 38-15 in the Big Ten, seven seasons). Wisconsin: Gary Andersen (15-6 overall, 9-3 in the Big Ten, two seasons).

SERIES: Tied 4-4

WISCONSIN FAST FACTS

Location: Madison, Wis.

Enrollment: 43,275

All-Time Football Record: 658-482-53

All-Time Big Ten Record: 347-366-41

Post-Season Record: 11-14

National Championships: 1

Consensus All-Americans: 25

First-Team All-Big Ten Selections: 219

Lettermen Returning/Lost: 46/27

Starters Returning/Lost: 11/13

Offensive Formation: Multiple

Defensive Formation: 3-4

DID YOU KNOW?

Wisconsin's win over Rutgers on Nov. 1 made the Badgers bowl eligible for the 13th-consecutive season.

2014 SCHEDULE

Date	Opponent	Result
Aug. 30	vs. LSU*	L, 24-28
Sept. 6	Western Illinois	W, 37-3
Sept. 20	Bowling Green	W, 68-17
Sept. 27	South Florida	W, 27-10
Oct. 4	@ Northwestern	L, 14-20
Oct. 11	Illinois	W, 38-28
Oct. 25	Maryland	W, 52-7
Nov. 1	@ Rutgers	W, 37-0
Nov. 8	@ Purdue	
Nov. 15	Nebraska	
Nov. 22	@ Iowa	
Nov. 29	Minnesota	

* Houston, Texas (NRG Stadium)



PHOTOS COURTESY OF WISCONSIN SPORTS INFORMATION

Junior running back Melvin Gordon is one of the nation's leading rushers.

Scouting Report



rushed for 284 yards or more, including a season-high 644 against Bowling Green.

Conversely, Wisconsin has only thrown for more than 200 yards in a game twice this season.

The Badgers entered their game against the Scarlet Knights ranked second in the nation in rushing at 338.4 yards per game and led the country with an average of 7.22 yards per rushing attempt.

AS GOOD AS IT GETS

Wisconsin's defense has been really good this season. No Badger opponent has scored more than 28 points and that's happened just twice in eight games. In fact, other than LSU and Illinois, no team Wisconsin has faced has score more than 20 points.

The Badgers entered their game at Rutgers with the nation's No. 7-ranked scoring defense (allowing 16.1 points per game) and the fourth best in total defense (270.1 yards).

All Wisconsin's D did against the Scarlet Knight was allow eight first downs and didn't allow them to get inside its 26-yard line until the final play of the game. Wisconsin was the first opponent to shut out Rutgers in more than a decade (2002, 147 games).

JUST WIN

Since the start of the 2009 season, Wisconsin is 55-20 with nearly half of those wins (27) coming by at least 25 points, and all but one of the losses coming by seven points or less. The Badgers have won at least nine games in four of the last five seasons, and in eight of the last 10, which makes Wisconsin one of just eight schools to achieve that level of consistent winning. Only Boise State (nine years) and LSU (nine) hit the nine-win plateau more often than Wisconsin from 2004 to 2013.

REMEMBER WHEN?

No. 22 Nebraska 30, Wisconsin 27

Sept. 29, 2012 at Lincoln, Nebraska

The Huskers dug themselves a hole early, but were able to rally in the second half to improve to 4-1 on the season.

Nebraska trailed 20-3 in the first half, but outscored the visitors 17-7 in the third quarter to draw even before Brett Maher's 41-yard field goal with 9:41 left in the fourth

quarter proved to be the difference.

Taylor Martinez guided four straight scoring drives in the second half. He ran for 107 yards and a touchdown and threw for another 181 and a pair of scores.

The comeback tied the second-largest comeback in program history (Nebraska rallied from a 21-point deficit in the third quarter against Ohio State in 2011).

Wisconsin quarterback Joel Stave completed 12-of-23 passes for 214 yards.

Later in the season at the Big Ten Championship, the Badgers avenged the loss with a 70-31 victory.

LAST TIME OUT

Wisconsin 37, Rutgers 0

Nov. 1, 2014 at Piscataway, N.J.

The Badgers once again ran their way to a blowout victory. Melvin Gordon ran for 128 yards and two touchdowns and Corey Clement added 131 yards and a pair of scores.

In addition to Wisconsin's dominate running game, the Badgers defense continues to be a major story. In back-to-back games, the Badgers have allowed just seven points.

Wisconsin dominated Rutgers on a rainy, dreary day, jumping out to a 20-0 halftime lead that grew to 30-0 at the end of three quarters. Wisconsin quarterback Joel Stave completed 12-of-23 passes for 214 yards.

DID YOU KNOW?

- Wisconsin entered its game at Rutgers as one of only four teams to rank among the FBS' top 15 in all four major defensive categories (along with Clemson, Louisville and Stanford).

- Melvin Gordon is the nation's active career leader in rushing average at 7.91 per carry (prior to the Rutgers game) and is on pace to break the all-time FBS best of 7.32 set by USC's Reggie Bush.

- Wisconsin has won 27-straight games kickoff off at 11 a.m. CST.

- Only six schools (Florida State, Virginia Tech, Georgia, Georgia Tech, Oklahoma and LSU) have longer bowl streaks than Wisconsin. The Badgers are now bowl eligible for the 13th-straight season.

- Through seven games, Wisconsin had allowed just six sacks, ranking in a tie for the seventh-fewest in the FBS.

Coach Gary Andersen



Resume: After spending four seasons as Utah State's head coach, Gary Andersen became Wisconsin's

32nd head coach on Dec. 19, 2012, when he replaced Bret Bielema, who departed for Arkansas. In his first year in Madison, Andersen guided the Badgers to a second-place finish in the Leaders Division. Prior to being head coach at Utah State, Andersen was Utah's defensive coordinator for three years where he coached the 2008 team that went undefeated and beat Alabama in the Sugar Bowl to finish second in the nation. Andersen was also Southern Utah's head coach in 2003.

KNOW YOUR FOE

Melvin Gordon, RB, 6-1, 213, Jr.



Has 17 rushing touchdowns in his last six games. Gordon has rushed for 1,296 yards and 18 touchdowns this season. He has rushed for 122 or more yards in six-straight games and only been held to less than 100 once this season.

Derek Landisch, ILB, 6-0, 231, Sr.



Is Wisconsin's leader in sacks with 5.0 and tackles for loss with 11.0. Landisch is also second on the team with 42 stops on the year.

Joel Stave, QB, 6-5, 220, Jr.



Stave has only thrown for more than 100 yards in two games this season and has split time at the quarterback position with Tanner McEvoy. He has three TD passes and three interceptions this fall.

2013 RESULTS

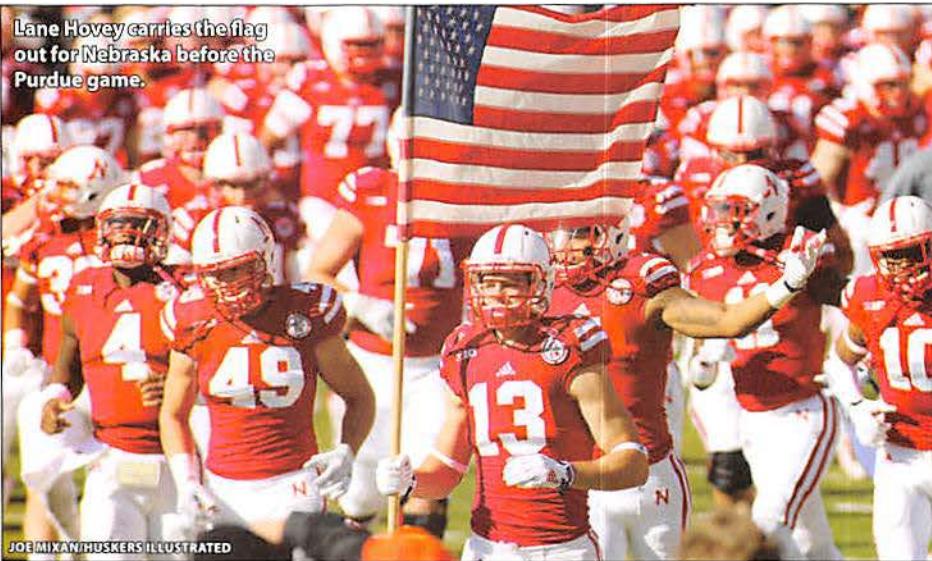
(9-4 overall, 6-2 Big Ten)

Date	Opponent	Result
Aug. 31	Massachusetts	W, 45-0
Sept. 7	Tennessee Tech	W, 48-0
Sept. 14	@ Arizona State	L, 30-32
Sept. 21	Purdue	W, 41-10
Sept. 28	@ Ohio State	L, 24-31
Oct. 12	Northwestern	W, 35-6
Oct. 19	@ Illinois	W, 56-32
Nov. 2	@ Iowa	W, 28-9
Nov. 9	BYU	W, 27-17
Nov. 16	Indiana	W, 51-3
Nov. 23	@ Minnesota	W, 20-7
Nov. 30	Penn State	L, 24-31
Jan. 1	South Carolina ⁶	L, 24-34

⁶Capital One Bowl (Orlando, Fla.)

BIGTEN BEAT | COMPILED BY DOUG GRIFFITHS

Down the stretch they come; race to title game heating up



As the calendar turned to November, one thing is very obvious when looking at the Big Ten standings, the final four weeks of the regular season should be outstanding when you look at the races unfolding.

The East Division is a two-team battle between Michigan State and Ohio State and those teams collide Nov. 8 in East Lansing in what should be the league's biggest game of the season.

Unlike the East, the West Division race is wide open.

Nebraska heads into its final bye week of the season a top the standings, but only because it has played one more game than the three other one-loss teams.

Nipping at the Huskers' heels are Minnesota, Iowa and Wisconsin.

What's so great about the teams chasing Bo Pelini's club for a spot in next month's Big Ten Championship Game in Indianapolis is Nebraska's next three games are against the Badgers, Golden Gophers and Hawkeyes. No way could the Big Ten schedule makers ever have dreamt of a better way to conclude the regular season with each game in the final three weeks holding

huge significance.

As we prep for the stretch drive, the Big Ten now features seven bowl eligible teams. Furthermore, every conference team still has a mathematical chance to become bowl eligible.

Following *Huskers Illustrated* recaps Week Five of football happenings around the Big Ten.

EAST DIVISION INDIANA HOOSIERS

Due to crippling injuries, IU's passing game is just awful.

In the last two games, the Hoosiers have thrown for a total of 35 yards.

Freshman quarterback Zander Diamont was only 5-for-8 passing for 24 yards in the loss to the Wolverines.

IU running back Tevin Coleman, who fumbled twice and was benched for a period of time, continues to be a bright spot for the team that has lost three straight games. At Michigan, Coleman ran for 108 yards on a season-high 27 carries. Coleman extended his streak of 100-yard games to 10 in a row.

EAST DIVISION

2014 Standings

Team	Overall	Conference
Michigan State	7-1	4-0
Ohio State	7-1	4-0
Maryland	6-3	3-2
Michigan	4-5	2-3
Rutgers	5-4	1-4
Penn State	4-4	1-4
Indiana	3-5	0-4

WEST DIVISION

Team	Overall	Conference
Nebraska	8-1	4-1
Minnesota	6-2	3-1
Iowa	6-2	3-1
Wisconsin	6-2	3-1
Northwestern	3-5	2-3
Illinois	4-5	1-4
Purdue	3-6	1-4

Nov. 1 Results

Nebraska 35, Purdue 14
Maryland 20, Penn State 19
Iowa 48, Northwestern 7
Wisconsin 37, Rutgers 0
Michigan 34, Indiana 10
Ohio State 55, Illinois 14

Nov. 8 Games

Wisconsin @ Purdue, 11 a.m.
Penn State @ Indiana, 11 a.m.
Iowa @ Minnesota, 11 a.m.
Michigan @ Northwestern 2:30 p.m.
Ohio State @ Michigan State, 7 p.m.
IDLE: Nebraska, Rutgers, Illinois, Maryland

Nov. 15 Games

Indiana @ Rutgers
Iowa @ Illinois
Temple @ Penn State
Nebraska @ Wisconsin
Ohio State @ Minnesota
Northwestern @ Notre Dame
Michigan State @ Maryland
IDLE: Michigan, Purdue

All times CT

MARYLAND TERRAPINS

The Terrapins became bowl eligible thanks to arguably their biggest win of the year, certainly their most thrilling victory. Maryland's Brad Chaddock kicked a 43-yard field goal with 51 seconds left that proved to be the game-winner.

No doubt a new Big Ten rivalry was born in Happy Valley as these two teams were heated from the outset. Maryland's captains refused to shake hands with Penn State before the game started and the Terps were penalized. That gesture didn't sit well with Terrapins' head coach Randy Edsall. Edsall said Maryland athletic director Kevin Anderson called Penn State's athletic director to apologize.

Maryland's win was its first ever at Penn State and just its second in the series history, which it trails 35-2-1.

"Let the rivalry begin now; let it begin," Edsall said. "There should be a trophy for this game. It's a bordering state.

"Let's really make it competitive."

MICHIGAN STATE SPARTANS

The Spartans spent their bye week preparing for their clash with Ohio State and during the week got some very good news when junior quarterback Connor Cook announced he expects to return for his season in 2015.

Unless "things go really well," Cook will be back to guide the Spartans for another year.

"You want to use up your eligibility," Cook said. "Michigan State's a great place, and I've had a lot of fun here and I had a lot of great relationships. You never want to kiss stuff goodbye."

Cook has thrown for nearly 1,900 yards with 17 touchdowns and six interceptions this season.

Cook could leave if he was projected as a high first-round pick in the NFL, but he doesn't believe that will happen.

MICHIGAN WOLVERINES

Michigan extended its winning streak over Indiana to 19 games, which tied Ohio State's 19 gamer over IU for the longest active Big Ten streak by one team over another.

The Wolverines blowout victory over the Hoosiers came in the aftermath of Michigan athletic director Dave Brandon's resignation. Quarterback Devin Gardner threw for two touchdowns and Drake Johnson ran for a pair to help Michigan get one step closer to bowl eligibility. If the Wolverines win two of their last three games (at Northwestern, Maryland and at Ohio State), they will be bowl eligible.

RUTGERS SCARLET KNIGHTS

Rutgers has been having a tough time getting win No. 6. The Scarlet Knights have lost three games in a row, but that losing skid has a good chance to end. After a bye they'll host struggling Indiana.

Rutgers' offense really struggled against visiting Wisconsin, gaining a mere 139 yards. The Scarlet Knights have been outscored 135-41 the past three weeks.

"I just left a really frustrated football team right now," Rutgers head coach Kyle Flood said. "When you have a game like you did today, when you have a three-game stretch like we have, I think that's probably a good thing. We've got to get better."

OHIO STATE BUCKEYES

The Buckeyes are crushing opponents in Columbus. In its last four home games, Ohio State has scored 50 or more points in each one of those. The Buckeyes blew out hapless Illinois Nov. 1 to run their record to 7-1 on the season and won for the sixth consecutive time.

Quarterback J.T. Barrett, who was nursing a sprained medial collateral ligament in his left knee and wearing a brace, threw for two scores to help Ohio State extend its Big Ten win streak to a record-tying 20.

The Buckeyes had 545 yards of total offense.

PENN STATE NITTANY LIONS

The Nittany Lions are slumping, having lost four straight, and if they don't split their last four games, they'll be home for the holidays.

Three of those four losses have come

by seven points or less, including the latest one-point home defeat to Maryland. Penn State continues to have a problem protecting quarterback Christian Hackenberg. The Terrapins sacked him six times, running his sack total to 31 this season. The Nittany Lions managed just 42 yards rushing. In the last four games, Penn State has failed to rush for more than 55 yards in all of those contests.

WEST DIVISION

ILLINOIS FIGHTING ILLINI

Illinois' 41-point loss at Ohio State was its worst since a 45-0 defeat in 2012 to Michigan. The Illini committed four turnovers and trailed 31-0 at halftime and 48-0 midway through the third quarter. The loss dropped Illinois head coach Tim Beckman's three-year record in Champaign to a dismal 10-23 and there's no way he keeps his job unless his team wins two of its last three games to become bowl eligible, and even that might not be enough.

IOWA HAWKEYES

Iowa is rolling at just the right time. The Hawkeyes have their running game and passing game hitting on all cylinders. Iowa racked up 483 yards in its win over visiting Northwestern, including 262 through the air and 221 on the ground. Backs Akrum Wadley and Mark Weisman combined for 200 of those rushing yards and had four touchdowns. Wadley became Iowa's first 100-yard rusher in 11 games.

"If we're going to be any good, we have to run the ball effectively," Iowa head coach Kirk Ferentz said. "I think we took a step forward today."

MINNESOTA GOLDEN GOPHERS

Minnesota has had a week off to get ready for Iowa, a team that has improved as much as any other in the Big Ten.

The Gophers will have to be much better down the stretch than what they were in a loss at Illinois the last time out.

If Minnesota doesn't improve in a hurry, it will lose its final four – Iowa, Ohio State and road games against Nebraska and Wisconsin.

NORTHWESTERN WILDCATS

How Nebraska's 2014 Opponents Fared?



FLORIDA ATLANTIC
Result: L, UAB 31-28
Up Next: North Texas
Current Record: 3-6



MCNEESE STATE
Result: W, NW State 35-28
Up Next: Stephen F. Austin
Record: 6-2



FRESNO STATE
Result: L, Wyoming 45-17
Up Next: San Jose State
Record: 3-6



MIAMI
Result: W, North Carolina 47-20
Up Next: Florida State
Record: 6-3



ILLINOIS
Result: L, Ohio State 55-14
Up Next: Iowa
Current Record: 4-5



MICHIGAN STATE
Result: W, Michigan 35-11
Up Next: Ohio State
Record: 7-1



NORTHWESTERN
Result: L, Iowa 48-7
Up Next: Michigan
Record: 3-5



RUTGERS
Result: L, Wisconsin 37-0
Up Next: Indiana
Record: 5-4



PURDUE
Result: L, Nebraska 35-14
Up Next: Wisconsin
Current Record: 3-6



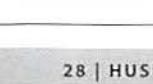
WISCONSIN
Result: W, Rutgers 37-0
Up Next: Purdue
Record: 6-2



MINNESOTA
Result: L, Illinois 28-24
Up Next: Iowa
Record: 6-2



IOWA
Result: W, Northwestern 48-7
Up Next: Minnesota
Record: 6-2



WEST BIG TEN EAST

The Wildcats are in free fall, losing three straight. Northwestern managed just 13 first downs and 75 yards passing in a blowout loss at Iowa.

Quarterback Trevor Siemian was just 8-of-18 passing for 68 yards.

Northwestern was held to a season-low 180 yards of offense.

The Wildcats trailed 24-0 in the first quarter and 38-7 at halftime.

PURDUE BOILERMAKERS

One of Purdue's top playmakers Danny Anthrop, the team's leading receiver, was likely lost for the season with what looked like a severe right knee injury on his punt return in the fourth quarter.

"It's a big blow," Boilermaker quarterback Austin Appleby said. "He's one of the best players on our team."

Purdue finished the Nebraska game without three of its top six receivers.

Earlier in the game, starting receiver

DeAngelo Yancey injured his right knee and was out of uniform on the sideline in the fourth quarter.

In addition, receiver B.J. Knauf didn't even make the trip to Lincoln.

WISCONSIN BADGERS

The Badgers blew out Rutgers on the road and did so with their ground game.

That's certainly not a surprise, but perhaps the fact that Melvin Gordon wasn't Wisconsin's leading rusher was.

Gordon was good (128 yards rushing and two touchdowns), but Corey Clement was a little better (131 yards rushing and a pair of scores).

"I can only give credit to my o-line," said Clement afterwards. "I give them all the credit. They did a great job."

It was Clement's sixth career 100-yard game and sixth time Gordon and Clement have rushed for 100-plus yards in the same game.



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Huskers Illustrated's Projected Nebraska Depth Chart

DEFENSE

P/Holder

Sam Foltz
Johnny Stanton

LS

Josh Faulkenberry
Paul Kelly

FS

Nate Gerry
Kieron Williams

SS

Corey Cooper
D.J. Singleton

NICKEL

Byerson Cockrell
Josh Kalu

PR

De'Mornay Pierson-El
Kenny Bell

CB

Daniel Davie
Josh Kalu

WDE

Randy Gregory
Jack Gangwish

NT

Vincent Valentine
Kevin Maurice

DT

Maliek Collins
Kevin Williams

SDE

Greg McMullen
AJ Natter

CB

Josh Mitchell
Boaz Joseph

WRX

Kenny Bell
Taariq Allen

LT

Alex Lewis
Matt Finnin

LG

Jake Cotton
Chongo Kondolo

C

Mark Pelini
Ryne Reeves

RG

Mike Moudy
Chongo Kondolo

RT

Zach Sterup
Givens Price

TE

Sam Cotton
Trey Foster

WRZ

Brandon Reilly
Alonzo Moore

WRA

Jordan Westerkamp
Lane Hovey

KOS

Drew Brown
Spencer Lindsay

QB

Tommy Armstrong Jr.
Ryker Fyfe

IB

Ameer Abdullah
Imani Cross

KR

Kenny Bell
Alonzo Moore

PK

Drew Brown
Spencer Lindsay

FB

Andy Janovich
Mitch McCann

OFFENSE



QUICK PICKS

Last Week, Season

Darren Ivy
(6-1, 35-28)

Mike Schaefer
(4-3, 44-19)

Michael Bruntz
(7-0, 42-21)

Bob Hamar
(5-2, 38-25)

Terry Douglass
(5-2, 40-23)

Doug Griffiths
(6-1, 43-20)

Lanny Holstein
(4-3, 42-21)

Nebraska vs Wisconsin	NU 24-17	WIS 31-17	NU 27-24	NU 34-27	NU 35-31	WIS 24-21	NU 42-28
Mississippi State vs. Alabama	Alabama	Alabama	Alabama	Alabama	Alabama	Alabama	Alabama
Auburn vs. Georgia	Auburn	Auburn	Auburn	Georgia	Auburn	Georgia	Georgia
Florida State vs. Miami	Miami	Florida State	Florida State	Miami	Florida State	Florida State	Florida State
Ohio State vs. Minnesota	Ohio State	Ohio State	Ohio State	Ohio State	Ohio State	Ohio State	Ohio State
LSU vs. Arkansas	LSU	LSU	LSU	LSU	LSU	LSU	LSU
Arizona vs. Washington	Arizona	Washington	Arizona	Arizona	Arizona	Arizona	Arizona

Catching up with **TROY WATCHORN**

Defensive Back 1996-2000

By Darren Ivy/Huskers Illustrated

With his interception on Saturday against Purdue sophomore safety Nate Gerry has come within one game of tying the school record held by Troy Watchorn and Josh Bullocks for interceptions in four consecutive games.

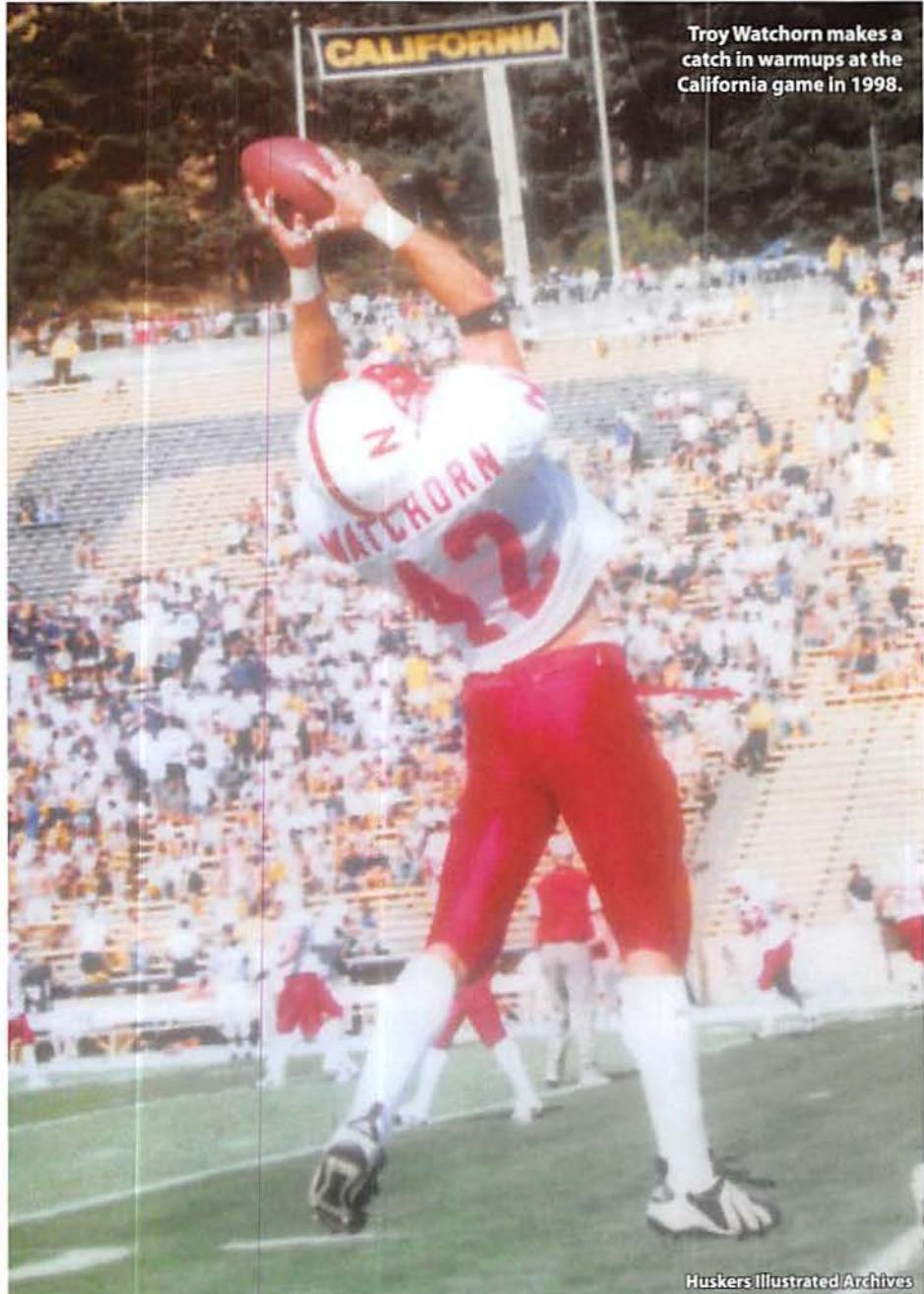
Gerry will have his chance to tie the record on Nov. 15 when the Huskers travel to Wisconsin. One person who is hoping he continues his streak of picks is Watchorn, who is now a personal trainer and owner of T-7 Fitness in Omaha.

"I wish him the best of luck in breaking the record and hope him and the rest of the Blackshirts continue to get better and more dominant as a unit," said Watchorn, who was a defensive back for Nebraska from 1996 to 2000.

Watchorn looks back fondly at his senior season in 2000 when the former walk-on from Columbus High School led the team with five interceptions, including four in a row against Iowa, Missouri, Iowa State and Texas Tech.

His streak ended against Baylor, but then the next game against Oklahoma, he ended Sooner quarterback Josh Heupel's consecutive passes without an interception streak with his fifth and final interception of the season.

"I don't think you ever go into a game thinking I'm going to pick a ball in consecutive games," Watchorn said. "You do what you are coached to do and when the opportunity presents itself, you make the play. All that said, it's not that easy, but great players make plays in games whether they are big or small. They are consistent."



Troy Watchorn makes a catch in warmups at the California game in 1998.

Huskers Illustrated Archives

The Huskers finished the 2000 season with a 10-2 record that included a 66-17 win over Northwestern in the Alamo Bowl.

Individually, Watchorn earned the Tom Novak Nebraska senior award for perseverance and also was selected third-team All-

Big 12 by the coaches.

Following Nebraska, Watchorn played Arena Football for the Lincoln Lightning for a year or two before he blew out his knee.

While he played for the Lightning, Watchorn also worked for the National Strength

and Conditioning Association, which had been founded by Nebraska strength coach Boyd Epley and headquartered in Lincoln for a number of years.

Watchorn then moved to Greeley, Colo. for several years where he helped train athletes with some other former Nebraska guys.

Around 2004, Watchorn moved back to Nebraska and helped set up the Explosive Edge. From 2004-08, he worked for 24 Hour Fitness before starting his own business, T-7 Fitness at the end of 2008. He operates that business out of the Common Grounds in Elkhorn.

"I am a functional movement specialist so I basically teach people how to move more efficiently," said Watchorn, who was an Exercise Science and Physiology major at Nebraska.

Watchorn said one of the exciting things he is working with now is testing people for their Athletic Standard Index scores.

This is a national standard that was developed by former NU strength coaches Mike

Athur and Epley, and takes vertical jump, pro-agility, 10-yard dash plus some key physical measurements like height, weight, wing span to come up with a ASI score.

Average AS Index scores for high school-age students who don't play sports range from 325 to 450. A Division III athlete will score between 700-900, while Division I athletes will score around 1,500. Elite talent scores at 1,700 and above, and former Florida quarterback Tim Tebow rated a 2,139 in his prime.

"This testing helps parents be able to track how their kids are developing compared to others," Watchorn said. "It seems like nowadays, I am developing athletes at a younger age from third grade on."

With the base standard set, Watchorn is able to customize workouts for athletes specific to their sports and goals.

"Our programs help fuse two very different worlds: the weight room with absolute strength and power and the arena with sport-specific movement strength and pow-

er," Watchorn said. "We combine workouts from the weight room with exercises and drills in the arena to improve self-confidence, balance and coordination, flexibility, strength and power. These results help the athlete's speed, agility, leaping ability and overall athleticism, which helps them perform at the highest levels."

Watchorn also works with adults who are rehabbing from knee, back and shoulder injuries as well as stroke patients, who are trying to get back on track.

Watchorn said despite being away from the football program for 14 years, he will sometimes have people want to talk about his glory days at Nebraska.

Should Gerry get a pick against Wisconsin and tie Watchorn's record, you can be sure, it will start a new batch of recognition.

"Kids think it's pretty cool that I was a Blackshirt," Watchorn said. "I am always surprised how many people remember me and some remember the stats better than I do."

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Nov. 10, 1923

Led by defensive tackle Ed Weir, a Nebraska squad with a season record of 1-1-2 upset Notre Dame 14-7 before an estimated crowd of 30,000 at newly dedicated Memorial Stadium in Lincoln. The Cornhuskers scored on a 20-yard pass from Rufus Dewitz to Dave Noble early in the second quarter and a 24-yard touchdown run by Noble, giving NU a 14-0 lead in the fourth quarter.

Nov. 11, 1967

Nebraska's defense recorded its fourth shutout of the season, blanking Oklahoma State 9-0 in homecoming game at Memorial Stadium. The one TD came in the second quarter when Dennis Richafsky scored on a 4-yard pass from Frank Patrick and Bill Bomberger added a 29-yard field goal in the fourth quarter. Ben Gregory led the Huskers' offense with 120 yards rushing, while Joe Orduna had 78 rushing yards.

Nov. 12, 1977

Several records were set or tied during No. 12-ranked Nebraska's 52-7 drubbing of Kansas at Memorial Stadium. Not only did the Huskers rush for a single-game school-record 550 yards, but place-kicker Billy Todd tied Paul Rogers' 1969 school record for longest field goal (55 yards) and set a NU single-season mark with 12 field goals.

I.M. Hipp rushed for 200 yards and Rick Berns had 107 yards and three TDs on the ground to lead Nebraska's offense.

Nov. 13, 1982

Fourth-ranked Nebraska broke a 7-7 first-quarter tie on its way to a 48-10 victory over Iowa State at Ames. Junior quarterback Turner Gill ran for a 22-yard TD and threw a 49-yard scoring pass to give the Huskers a 21-7 halftime advantage. NU I-back Mike Rozier notched his sixth-consecutive 100-yard rushing game, running for 103 yards on 19 attempts before leaving the contest in the third quarter due to an ankle injury.

Nov. 14, 1992

After posting consecutive home victories over No. 8 Colorado and No. 13 Kansas, seventh-ranked Nebraska suffered a shocking 19-10 road loss at Iowa State. The Huskers were undone by fifth-year senior quarterback Marv Seiler, who rushed 24 times for 144 yards, including a 78-yard run that

set up the Cyclones only TD on Chris Ulrich's 2-yard run for the final score of the game with 10:50 to play. ISU outrushed NU, which entered the contest No. 1 nationally in rushing offense, by a 373-192 margin and owned a 37:15-22:45 advantage in time of possession.

Nov. 15, 1997

One week after pulling off the "The Miracle in Missouri" with a 45-38 overtime victory over the Tigers, no drama was necessary as No. 3 Nebraska blasted Iowa State 77-14. I-back Ahman Green led the way, rushing for 209 yards and three TDs for the Huskers, who took a 63-7 halftime lead. NU had 473 yards rushing and finished with 594 total yards.

"We feel like that is the best football team in America," Iowa State coach Dan McCarney said of Nebraska. "There is just no doubt in my mind that is the finest college football team in the country. I am on the coaches' poll and I have been voting them No. 1 all along, and they will get my vote again next week."

The first quarter lasted 62 minutes as the Huskers built a 35-0 lead.

"Somebody told me the first quarter was an hour long," Green said. "We'd kept scoring and that would stop the clock. They kept passing the ball and that would stop the clock."

McCarney said he didn't feel like NU was trying to run up the score.

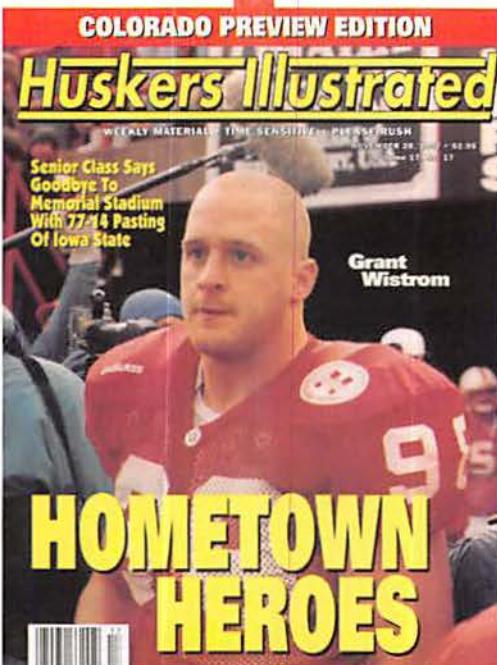
"We were absolutely ineffective on both sides of the ball in the first half," he said. "When people are putting up that many points and we're that ineffective, then it's our fault – not theirs."

Nebraska quarterback Scott Frost ended the game with 88 yards rushing and completed 8-of-9 passes for 111 yards. Frost said it was just the kind of game the offense wanted after struggling to pull out a victory the previous week at Missouri.

"We wanted to come out and take control after last week's game," Frost said. "And we came out and jumped on them early. I don't think there was more than one or two plays that didn't work just as they were supposed to."

Nov. 16, 2013

No. 14 Michigan State converted five Nebraska turnovers into 24 points on its way to a 41-28 road victory. Despite facing a Spartans' defense that entered the contest ranked No. 1 nationally in rushing defense, Huskers' I-back Ameer Abdullah rushed 22 times for 123 yards as NU outgained MSU 392-361. Michigan State led 20-7 at halftime, but took just a 27-21 advantage into the fourth quarter.



Coaches Corner

with Mark Manning Head Wrestling Coach



Huskers Illustrated reporter Lanny Holstein recently visited with Nebraska wrestling coach Mark Manning, who is in his 15th season. Manning's Huskers held an intrasquad meet on Nov. 1.

HI: With a strong senior class, do you have high expectations for this team?

MM: Yeah, most definitely, but I think the success of our team really relies on some redshirt freshmen and some redshirt freshmen last year that qualified for the NCAA tournament. Tim Lambert, T.J. Dudley, Colin Jensen, Micah Barnes, who is a redshirt sophomore now, he's going to see action for us, and Austin Wilson. Those guys are going to determine our NCAA finish. We already know James Green and Robert Kokesh are going to provide the leadership and step up.

HI: What can you tell us about the freshman class?

MM: Really good. Tyler Berger, Colton Adams, Hayden Tuma, Dustin Williams, those guys and even a recruited walk-on, Jake Anderson, is really showing a lot of promise. We're planning on redshirting those guys and planning for the future, so I really like the nucleus of guys we have.

HI: Do you like to redshirt as many freshman as you can? How much does that help a guy?

MM: It does help a guy, but it doesn't. Sometimes guys need it, as far as maturity, whether it's physically or mentally because it's just a different level, and some guys background just doesn't allow them to have that experience. A redshirt year really allows them to mature it a tough room and a tough conference, but some guys are ready for it. We'd love to do that with most guys, but like with Jake Sueflohn, we hadn't redshirted him, and we are going to do it this year because he had an injury, so it kind of played out right for Jake.

HI: Which spots do you expect the most competition at?

MM: I would say at 197 we have some options. Spencer Johnson is a fifth year kid. He's wrestled at 197 and at heavyweight for us, Micah Barnes has shown a lot of promise this last six months, and Aaron Studebaker, a local kid from Raymond, Neb., is a tough, hard nosed kid. We have some good depth in there and some options at some weight classes, which is exciting.

HI: What's the most important skill for a wrestler to have?

MM: Being tough. They have to show some level of toughness because they all have talent. When I'm out on the recruiting trail, I'm looking mostly for toughness. Toughness in the respect of fighting through things, showing it when they compete and train. They have to be tough minded. It doesn't always have to be Mean Joe Green tough, but there has to be a sign of toughness.

This Week



Husker Athletics

Thursday, Nov. 6

Men's Basketball

Southwest Minnesota State (Exhibition) at Pinnacle Bank Arena

Friday, Nov. 7

Women's Bowling

Crusader Classic, Valparaiso, Ind.

Wrestling

Wyoming Invitational at Laramie, Wyo.

Saturday, Nov. 8

Women's Bowling

Crusader Classic, Valparaiso, Ind.

Wrestling

Cowboy Open at Laramie, Wyo.

Women's Swimming & Diving

Arkansas at Devaney Natatorium

Women's Volleyball

Indiana at Bob Devaney Sports Center

Sunday, Nov. 9

Women's Bowling

Crusader Classic, Valparaiso, Ind.

Women's Basketball

Concordia St. Paul (Exhibition) Pinnacle Bank Arena

Wednesday, Nov. 12

Women's Volleyball

Michigan State at Bob Devaney Sports Center 7 p.m.

Thursday, Nov. 13

Women's Bowling

Big Red Invite in Lincoln

Friday, Nov. 14

Women's Bowling

Big Red Invite in Lincoln

Cross Country

NCAA Midwest Regional in Peoria, Ill. at 11 a.m.

Saturday, Nov. 15

Football

Wisconsin at Madison, Wisconsin



Story By BRIAN ROSENTHAL • *Photo By* MITCH OTTO

More confident Webster ready for second season

It's not often Nebraska's men's basketball program benefits from national television coverage of a game involving National Basketball Association players against international competition.

Yet Husker sophomore guard Tai Webster, a New Zealand native, earned some serious TV time this summer, when his country's national team faced Team USA in the FIBA World Cup competition in Spain.

And we're talking about more than Webster's photo-bomb during ESPN's on-camera interview with Stephen Curry, too.

While a still shot of Webster's big grin as he passed behind Curry became lightheartedly popular in social media circles with Nebraska fans, what Webster accomplished on the court throughout six games in Spain is of far more substance.

The starting point guard in games against Turkey, Dominican Republic, Team USA, Ukraine, Finland and Lithuania, Webster averaged 5.3 points, three rebounds, and 1.5 assists.

Those modest numbers don't tell the real story, though, and perhaps

2014-15 Men's Basketball Schedule

Nov. 6, 2014	SW Minnesota (Exh)	Pinnacle Bank Arena	7 p.m.
Nov. 16, 2014	Northern Kentucky	Pinnacle Bank Arena	1 p.m.
Nov. 18, 2014	Central Arkansas	Pinnacle Bank Arena	7 p.m.
Nov. 22, 2014	at Rhode Island	Kingston, R.I.	6 p.m.
Nov. 25, 2014	Nebraska-Omaha	Pinnacle Bank Arena	7 p.m.
Nov. 28, 2014	Tennessee-Martin	Pinnacle Bank Arena	TBA
Dec. 1, 2014	at Florida State	Tallahassee, Fla.	6 p.m.
Dec. 7, 2014	Creighton	Pinnacle Bank Arena	6 p.m.
Dec. 10, 2014	Incarnate Word	Pinnacle Bank Arena	7 p.m.
Dec. 13, 2014	Cincinnati	Pinnacle Bank Arena	8 p.m.
Dec. 22, 2014	at Hawaii	Honolulu, Hawaii	11:59 p.m.
Dec. 23, 2014	Wich. State/Loyola	Honolulu, Hawaii	TBA
Dec. 25, 2014	TBA	Honolulu, Hawaii	TBA
Dec. 31, 2014	Indiana *	Pinnacle Bank Arena	TBA
Jan. 5, 2015	at Iowa *	Iowa City, Iowa	8 p.m.
Jan. 8, 2015	Rutgers *	Pinnacle Bank Arena	8 p.m.
Jan. 11, 2015	Illinois *	Pinnacle Bank Arena	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 15, 2015	at Wisconsin *	Madison, Wisconsin	8 p.m.
Jan. 20, 2015	Minnesota *	Pinnacle Bank Arena	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 24, 2015	Michigan State *	Pinnacle Bank Arena	TBA
Jan. 27, 2015	at Michigan *	Ann Arbor, Mich.	6 p.m.
Jan. 31, 2015	at Minnesota *	Minneapolis, Minn.	5 p.m.
Feb. 3, 2015	Northwestern *	Pinnacle Bank Arena	6:30 p.m.
Feb. 7, 2015	at Penn State *	State College, Penn.	3 p.m.
Feb. 10, 2015	Wisconsin *	Pinnacle Bank Arena	8 p.m.
Feb. 15, 2015	at Purdue *	West Lafayette, Ind.	4:15 p.m.
Feb. 19, 2015	at Maryland *	College Park, Md.	6 p.m.
Feb. 22, 2015	Iowa *	Pinnacle Bank Arena	TBA
Feb. 26, 2015	at Ohio State *	Columbus, Ohio	6 p.m.
March 4, 2015	at Illinois *	Champaign, Ill.	9 p.m.
March 8, 2015	Maryland *	Pinnacle Bank Arena	TBA
March 11, 2015	Big Ten Tournament	Chicago, Ill.	TBA
March 12, 2015	Big Ten Tournament	Chicago, Ill.	TBA
March 13, 2015	Big Ten Tournament	Chicago, Ill.	TBA
March 14, 2015	Big Ten Tournament	Chicago, Ill.	TBA
March 15, 2015	Big Ten Tournament	Chicago, Ill.	TBA
March 17, 2015	NCAA Tournament	TBA	TBA
*	Conference Games		

the most important one.

In playing against some of the world's best players, Webster rediscovered his confidence, something he's counting on carrying over to his sophomore season with Nebraska.

"To play against that level of competition was, again, just huge for me," said Webster, a 6-foot-4, 192-pound guard. "It was definitely a confidence boost to see where I'm at compared to some of the best players in the world."

Webster's renewed confidence level is important because, as a true freshman, he had little confidence by the end of the season. He was scoreless in Nebraska's final five games, and for the season averaged 3.9 points while shooting 30.4 percent from the field.

In Nebraska's NCAA Tournament loss to Baylor, Webster exited the game in the first half after making a defensive error, and never returned to the lineup. Distraught on the bench, he was consoled by teammates and coaches.

That, as much as anything, was a sign the off-season hype over Webster, a touted international recruit, had gotten to him.

"I think there definitely was some pressure surrounding that, but I wouldn't say that's the main reason why I struggled toward the end of the year," Webster said. "It was just myself, really. I just wanted to play well and it just wasn't working out, so confidence just naturally goes lower."

This, of course, isn't Webster's first time playing international competition; he made the New Zealand national team at age 17, part of the reason he came to Lincoln with high expectations.

But Nebraska coach Tim Miles said Webster's most recent experience was probably more beneficial.

"When you do it when you're younger, you just try to survive," Miles said. "Now he's had to do it as he's older, he found a way to be more productive, and I think he did a pretty good job."

Miles said he could notice a rejuvenated, more confident Webster when he returned to Lincoln in September.

"As he's come back in his workouts, that aggressiveness is back, there's no hesitation. He's shooting better in workouts," Miles said. "I just think when you've been asked to play up for so long, against older guys, especially, that I think that was really good for him."

The improved shooting has carried over, too. Webster shot well from three-point range in Nebraska's closed scrimmage with Kansas State, one the Huskers won by seven points on a neutral Omaha court.

And in Nebraska's loose, 15-minute scrimmage before some 2,500 fans at Pinnacle Bank Arena, Webster had a couple of three-pointers among his 12 points.

Miles said it's too early to determine who will be Nebraska's starting point guard – Benny Parker and true freshman Tarin Smith are also candidates – but that Webster is an option at either guard position.

"Tai can play one or two. I do feel comfortable with that," Miles said. "I feel like he's shooting the ball, that he's big enough to guard a lot of two-guards, he's playing quicker and stronger than ever, in terms of getting around screens and those things you have to do as a two-guard. You have to be really quick in this league to play the two and defend the twos, because they can hurt you."

Because he was in Spain, Webster missed the first two weeks of the fall semester. His absence in two classes was pre-approved by his professors, Miles said, and arrangements were made ahead of time for him to catch up on his class work once Webster returned to Lincoln.

Webster, whose GPA is above 3.0, also began taking two classes online when the semester started Aug. 25.

Webster's most memorable moment playing in the FIBA World Cup?

"I mean, I blocked Kyrie (Irving) one time," he said of the Cleveland Cavaliers' point guard. "I blocked him. That's probably my claim to fame."

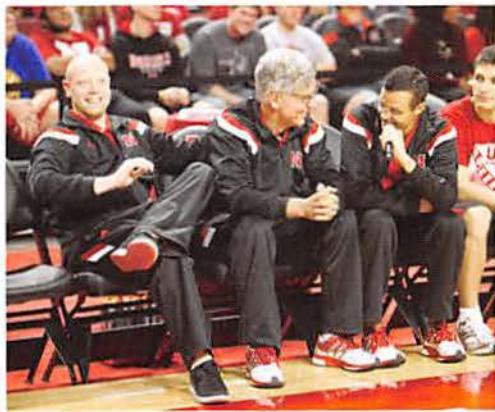
A claim to fame, and a confidence builder.

"When I first came here, there was a lot of hype surrounding me. I didn't know what I was in for," Webster said. "But this year, I've got a year under my belt, and I'm ready to go."



BIG RED TIP-OFF

Photos By MITCH OTTO



Clockwise from left: Head coach Tim Miles introduces new assistant Jim Molinari. Walter Pitchford concentrates during the three-point contest in which he finished second. Terran Petteway goes up for a dunk during the scrimmage Oct. 29 at the Big Red Tip-Off at Pinnacle Bank Arena. Newcomer Moses Abraham (12) dunks the ball during the scrimmage. Miles jokes with senior Leslee Smith before the scrimmage.



Women's Basketball

Tear'a Lauderhill makes an acrobatic move against Anya Kalenta (31) and Emily Wood (12) during a scrimmage on Oct. 29 at Pinnacle Bank Arena.



Mitch Otto/Huskers Illustrated

Senior Emily Cady focuses during a three-point contest that she won against other women's and NU men's players on Oct. 29 at Pinnacle Bank Arena.



Mitch Otto/Huskers Illustrated

Senior Brandi Jeffery passes around Allie Havers (22).



Mitch Otto/Huskers Illustrated

2014-15 Women's Basketball Schedule

Nov. 2, 2014	Wayne State (Exh)	Pinnacle Bank Arena	2 p.m.
Nov. 9, 2014	Concordia-St. Paul (Exh)	Pinnacle Bank Arena	2 p.m.
Nov. 15, 2014	Pepperdine	Pinnacle Bank Arena	TBA
Nov. 16, 2014	Alcorn State	Pinnacle Bank Arena	5 p.m.
Nov. 19, 2014	at Washington State	Pullman, Wash.	10 p.m.
Nov. 23, 2014	Utah	Bob Devaney Center	1 p.m.
Nov. 28, 2014	at UCLA	Los Angeles, Calif.	3 p.m.
Nov. 30, 2014	Northern Colorado	Pinnacle Bank Arena	2 p.m.
Dec. 3, 2014	Duke	Pinnacle Bank Arena	6:30 p.m.
Dec. 7, 2014	at Alabama	Tuscaloosa, Ala.	2 p.m.
Dec. 11, 2014	at Creighton	Omaha, Neb.	8:05 p.m.
Dec. 13, 2014	Bakersfield	Pinnacle Bank Arena	2 p.m.
Dec. 20, 2014	High Point	Pinnacle Bank Arena	3 p.m.
Dec. 29, 2014	at Minnesota *	Minneapolis, Minn.	8 p.m.
Jan. 3, 2015	Maryland *	Pinnacle Bank Arena	3 p.m.
Jan. 8, 2015	at Michigan State *	East Lansing, Mich.	7:30 p.m.
Jan. 11, 2015	at Illinois *	Champaign, Illinois	2 p.m.
Jan. 15, 2015	Penn State *	Pinnacle Bank Arena	6 p.m.
Jan. 19, 2015	Purdue *	Pinnacle Bank Arena	6 p.m.
Jan. 22, 2015	at Wisconsin *	Madison, Wisconsin	7 p.m.
Jan. 26, 2015	at Iowa *	Iowa City, Iowa	8 p.m.
Jan. 29, 2015	Illinois *	Pinnacle Bank Arena	7 p.m.
Feb. 1, 2015	Michigan *	Pinnacle Bank Arena	2 p.m.
Feb. 5, 2015	at Rutgers *	Piscataway, N.J.	6 p.m.
Feb. 8, 2015	at Maryland *	College Park, MD	3 p.m.
Feb. 12, 2015	Iowa *	Pinnacle Bank Arena	8 p.m.
Feb. 15, 2015	Wisconsin *	Pinnacle Bank Arena	2 p.m.
Feb. 18, 2015	at Northwestern *	Evanston, Illinois	7 p.m.
Feb. 21, 2015	at Indiana *	Bloomington, Ind.	TBA
Feb. 24, 2015	Minnesota *	Pinnacle Bank Arena	8 p.m.
March 1, 2015	Ohio State *	Pinnacle Bank Arena	TBA
March 4, 2015	Big Ten Tournament	Chicago, Ill.	TBA
March 5, 2015	Big Ten Tournament	Chicago, Ill.	TBA
March 6, 2015	Big Ten Tournament	Chicago, Ill.	TBA
March 7, 2015	Big Ten Tournament	Chicago, Ill.	TBA
March 8, 2015	Big Ten Tournament	Chicago, Ill.	TBA
March 20, 2015	NCAA Tournament	TBA	TBA
*	Conference Games		

Nebraska fans got their first glimpse of the No. 16 ranked 2014-15 women's basketball team during the Big Red Tip-Off on Oct. 29 at Pinnacle Bank Arena. The Huskers scrimmaged for 15 minutes and also had several members of their squad compete in a three-point contest against the men's team.

The Huskers, which return four starters – Emily Cady, Rachel Theriot, Hailie Sample and Tear'a Lauderhill – from last season's 26-7 squad, finished the 2013-14 season at No. 13 in the AP Poll and No. 17 in the USA Today Coaches Top 25.

The coaches preseason poll will be released at a later date.

On. Nov. 2, Nebraska opened its exhibition schedule with a game against Division II Wayne State College at the Pinnacle Bank Arena.



SOUTHWEST HASTINGS

106 miles

Wilson outsmarts most of his opponents



HUSKER WRESTLER AUSTIN WILSON IS ONE OF THE SMARTEST GUY'S YOU'LL EVER MEET. HE COMPETES AS NEBRASKA'S 165-POUND STARTER, BUT HE ALMOST ENDED UP AT AN IVY LEAGUE SCHOOL.

"I actually took four of my five official visits," Wilson said. "I went out and visited Nebraska, obviously, but I also went out and visited Princeton, the University of Pennsylvania, and Columbia University. I was kind of looking Ivy League along with Nebraska."

Husker wrestling coach Mark Manning is glad to have him. Wilson is in his third season as a starter, and his smarts give him an edge, according to the coach.

"He's just a dedicated young man as both a student and as a wrestler," Manning said. "He wants to be a doctor, and he carries about a 3.97 GPA. He's just an outstanding student athlete here at Nebraska. He does everything right, and you can't get enough of those type of kids on your team."

Academics are obviously still a huge part of the equation for Wilson even though he chose against wrestling in an Ivy League environment. But there was something more important to him than that at Nebraska.

"The biggest thing was that everything was like a team here at Nebraska," he said. "Everyone was fighting for each other in the room, everyone's good friends, there aren't groups of people the hang out because everyone is friends with everyone, so I really liked that."

Wilson's part of a team that has a chance to do some big things in 2014-15. The Huskers return a pair of All-Americans from a year ago, and there is big time potential for a few more guys to earn that distinction this year, according to Manning.

"Can we have seven All-Americans this year?" the coach said. "Can we put ourselves in a position to win a national title? Can five other guys step up besides Robert and James? That's the mystery of coaching, and Austin is a big part of

that."

Wilson is on pace to start for four years as a Husker. Following a redshirt freshman season, in which he was injured, the Hastings native took over the top spot at 165-pounds and hasn't let it go.

"That says a lot," Manning said. "I tell recruits that if you can come to Nebraska and start three of your five years, you are pretty good, you are a stud. Austin started as a redshirt freshman, and now he's a redshirt junior with a great chance to be an All-American this year and next year."

He's in this position because of the same smarts and dedication that have made him successful in the classroom, according to Manning. Wilson himself acknowledges that his ability to work efficiently helps him on a day-to-day basis.

"There's so much more time that you have to put into not only wrestling, but school too," Wilson said. "There are a lot of great wrestlers who can't make it at the D-1 level because of just school."

Back on the wrestling mat, Wilson said he's a different wrestler heading into this season. He recently watched a video of himself as a freshman and couldn't help but laugh at the guy on the tape. The improvement is tangible.

"Since my freshman year? Leaps and bounds," Wilson said.

"There's matches from freshman year that I will watch and be surprised I won as many as I did doing stuff like that."

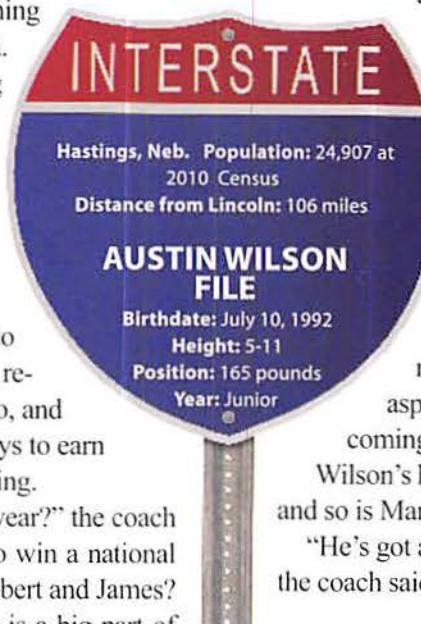
He wasn't very aggressive early in his career – something that isn't a problem any longer.

"I did not move very much on my feet, and I didn't have a go-to shot," Wilson said. "I really didn't shoot much, and I relied a lot on my defense to get me through matches. Obviously, I can get better at every aspect of wrestling, but I feel like my shots are coming along a lot better."

Wilson's hoping the improvements pay off in a big way, and so is Manning.

"He's got a chance to do something special this season," the coach said.

~ Story by Lamy Holstein





Courtesy of NU Sports Information

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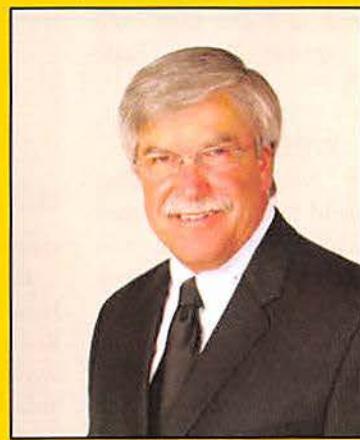
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MLS

Austin Wilson squares off against a Northwestern wrestler during a match last season.

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

The Nebraska women's basketball team opens the 2014-15 campaign with a No. 16 ranking in the Associated Press Preseason Top 25 released this past Thursday.

The Huskers, who return four starters from a 2013-14 squad that finished 26-7 overall and 12-4 in the Big Ten, are one of five Big Ten teams in the AP Preseason Poll, joining No. 10 Maryland, No. 14 Michigan State, No. 19 Iowa and No. 24 Rutgers.

Nebraska finished the 2013-14 season at No. 13 in the AP Poll and No. 17 in the USA Today Coaches Top 25. The coaches preseason poll will be released at a later date.

Defending national champion UConn was a unanimous No. 1, while South Carolina opens the year at No. 2 ahead of No. 3 Notre Dame and No. 4 Tennessee. Texas A&M rounds out the top five.

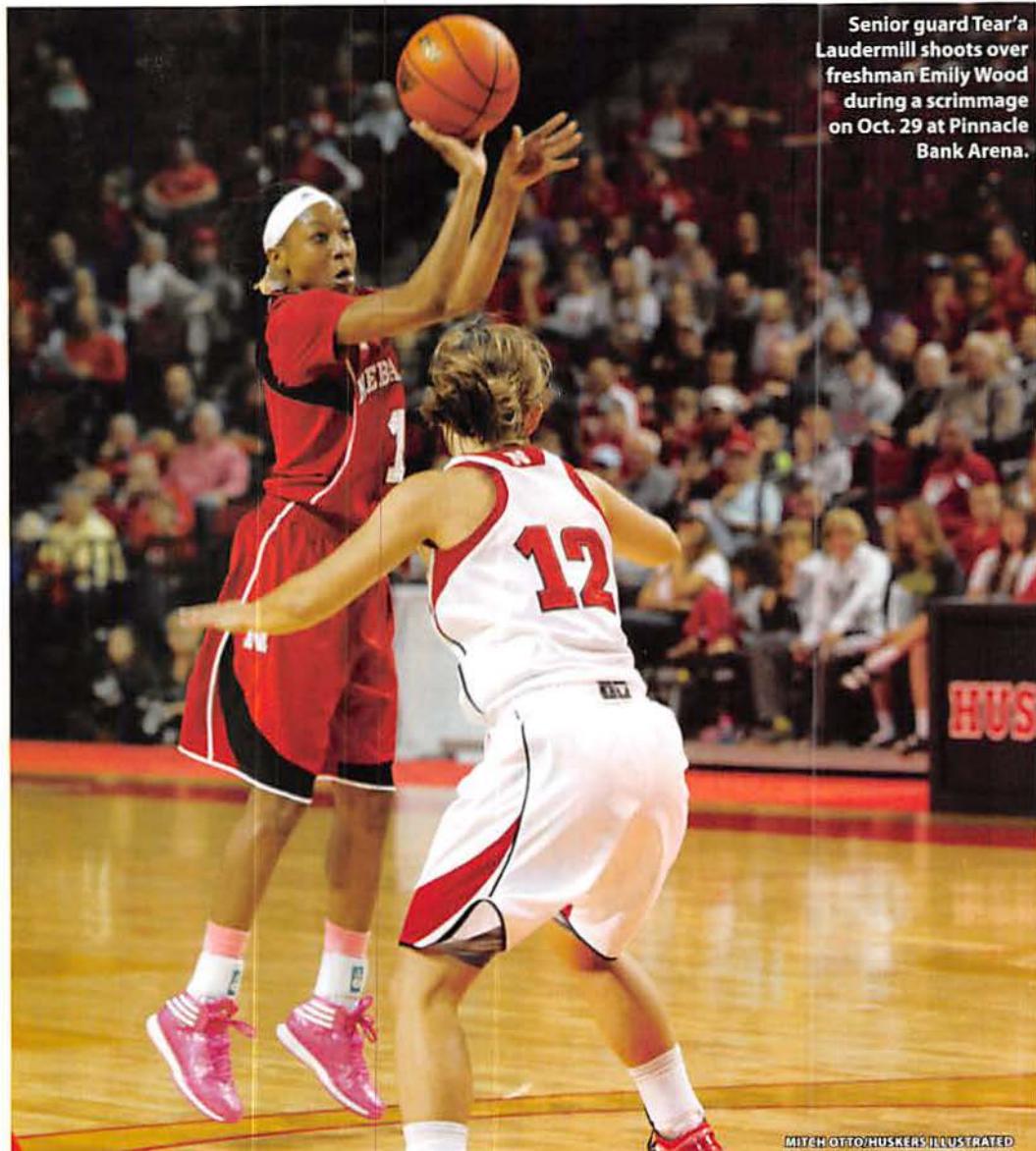
Nebraska opened the season with a home exhibition game against Wayne State Nov. 2.

WRESTLING

The Nebraska wrestling team held its annual Coaches Clinic/Intrasquad event this past Friday at the Devaney Center.

Coach Mark Manning, who enters his 15th season at Nebraska, introduced the team before the exhibition and commented on each wrestler during the competition. Assistant coach and Olympic gold medalist Jordan Burroughs also spoke to the crowd about the upcoming season.

The 90-minute workout included matches from all 10 weight classes, kind of a last chance for the wrestlers to make their case for a starting



MITCH OTTO/HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED

spot before the season.

Reigning All-Americans James Green (157) and Robert Kokesh (174) each began their senior season this past Saturday at the NWCA All-Star Classic in Philadelphia, Pa., and the Huskers begin their dual season on the road against Wyoming on Nov. 7.

WOMEN'S SOCCER

Caroline Flynn and Caroline Gray each scored to lead Nebraska to a 2-1 victory over Iowa on Senior Day in the final game in Nebraska Soccer Field history this past Friday.

Flynn's header came in the 35th minute off a Samantha Areman corner kick, and marked her fourth score of the season. The assist was Areman's first of the season, as the Huskers tied the score 1-1.

Gray broke the tie in the 76th minute when she knocked in the game winner to the upper left corner off a Mayme Conroy assist. The goal marked Gray's third of the season, and Conroy picked up her third assist of the 2014 campaign.

Iowa's goal came in the sixth minute when Cloe Lacasse chipped it over Husker goal-

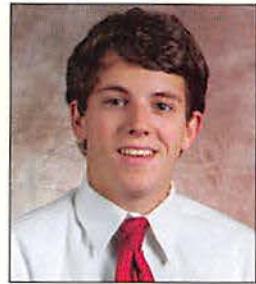
keeper Kelly Schatz off a breakaway, giving the Hawkeyes an early 1-0 lead. Schatz collected three saves for the game.

The Huskers outshot Iowa 15-8, which included an 8-3 edge in the second half. Conroy and Haley Hanson each contributed to NU's seven shots on goal for the game. The Huskers finished the regular season with an 8-9-2 record, which included a 4-7-2 mark in Big Ten play. This ranked NU ninth in Big Ten play so NU failed to make the tournament after winning it last season.

Senior guard Tear'a Lauderhill shoots over freshman Emily Wood during a scrimmage on Oct. 29 at Pinnacle Bank Arena.

10 questions

with Jonah Heng
Junior Cross Country Runner



1 How did you end up coming to Nebraska?

JH: Well, it started mostly because of running, but also the school too. Actually, my entire dad's side of the family is from Nebraska, so I came up here all the time as a kid to see my grandparents, aunts and uncles. Also, my brother ended up coming to school here, so there were a lot of ties. When I visited with coach Harris, I looked at the facilities and everything and kind of fell in love with it.

2 Your cousin, Jarren, was on the cross country team a year ago too, right?

JH: The funny thing was, I didn't actually know him. When I came on my visit, I knew of him, but I never met him, so those visits were the first two times I had ever actually met him.

3 So you both ended up on the same Division I cross country team. Must be some good genes, right?

JH: Well, I started running in high school because I wasn't really good at anything else, and I just wanted to get in shape... Nobody else in my immediate family had ever run before. I know (Jarren's) dad was a very good athlete in high school, and my dad played baseball and some other sports too, but there wasn't any running on my side. I knew that Jarren was a runner, but I didn't know any of his times or anything. We just ended up being on the same team in college, so that's kind of a cool thing.

4 How does a sloppy course affect you as a runner?

AP: Well, it effects everybody who's running on the same course. Obviously, if it's wet or muddy, it's going to be hard to get traction, and there will be slower times. If it's cold or windy that can have an effect too. I'm actually hoping its cold because I run better in the cold, but some of the other guys don't. That's just how I like it.

5 What's your game plan for a race?

JH: Usually we try to get out hard and not get caught in the back. It's a lot harder to move around people. You obviously don't want to go out too hard and regret it in the end, but you want to stay up with the top pack, and just try to run with the group. The last couple races I've tried to run with Joe Harter and Austin Post because those guys are up there. We try to pack up for as long as we can, but if one guy is having a bad day, he'll fall back.

6 Do you run with partners in practice?

JH: On the easy runs, we just run as a group, and on other runs we always start as a group, but where you finish kind of depends on if you are having a good day. We try to run as a group because it makes practice a lot easier, you can go faster and push each other. That just makes you better, but there's not specific guy that we're supposed to run with. It's just a group effort kind of thing.

7 9. What's it like going year round with cross country, track and indoor track?

JH: There's really no offseason. You go from the indoor to the outdoor season from cross country, and then in the summer, you are preparing for cross country again. Unless you take a week off in between seasons, there's really no off time, but at this point, I'm used to it because I've been doing it since freshman year of high school. You body adjusts to it.

8 2 Do you enjoy running or is it something that you got into because you are good at?

JH: I think it's some of both. When I get angry of something, going on a long run can help blow off some steam, just getting active, getting off your butt and getting moving. Also, I'm extremely competitive and hate to get beat. I want to try my hardest, and running is something that if you put in the work, you are going to see the benefits of it. I do enjoy it, but there are days where you don't want to do it.

9 6 Why is that?

JH: I don't know. It's just something that I've noticed. I've never really run well in the heat. A lot of my best races have come when it is cold and cloudy, not necessarily windy because that makes it harder, but the cold runs are better for me. I don't know why, but my body just doesn't like the heat a whole lot.

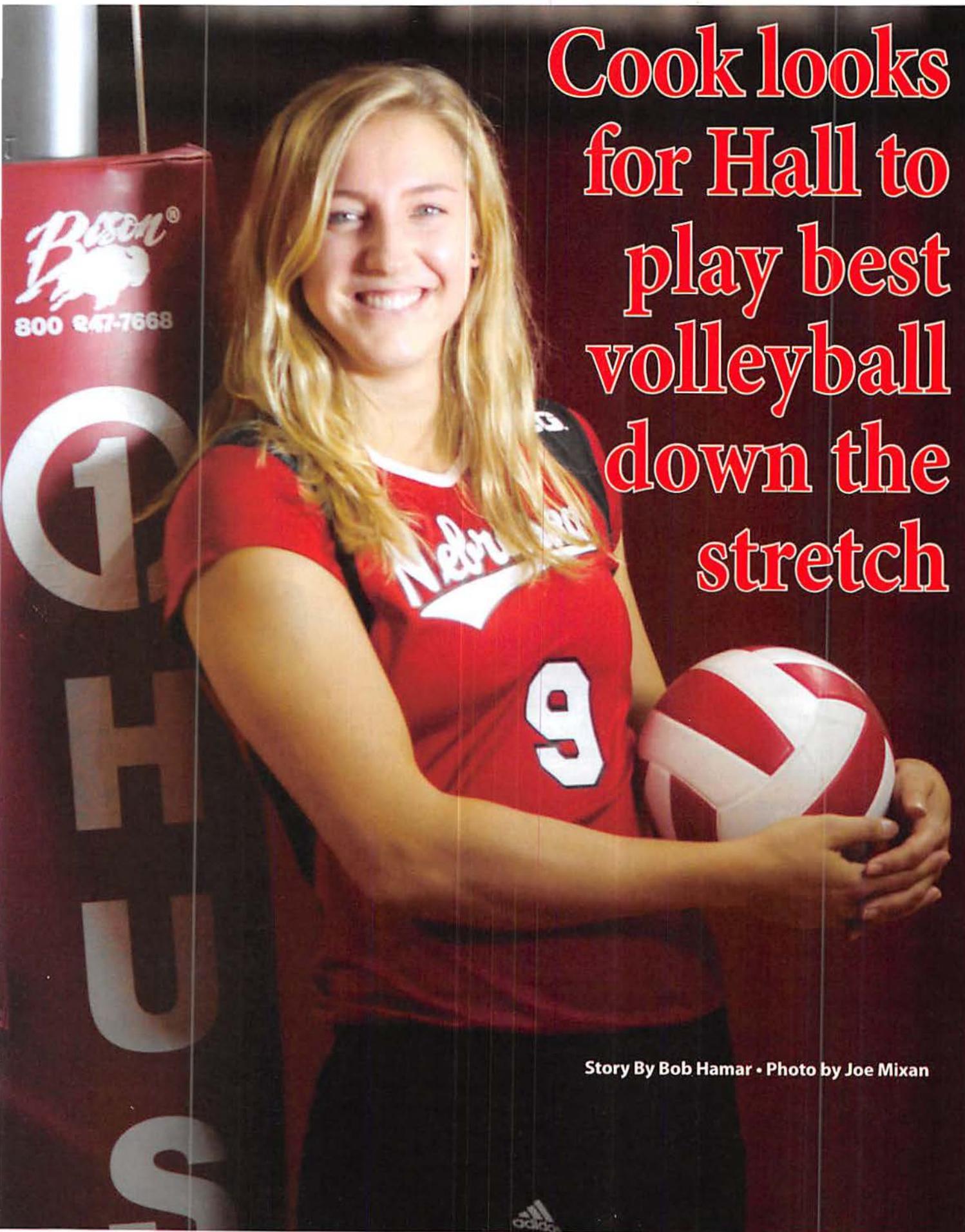
10 You're from Kansas City, so I have to ask you what your favorite KC

BBQ place is?

JH: I'd have to say the one I go to the most is called Zarda. It's the closest, and it is really good. Everything down there is good barbecue-wise, but I definitely go there the most. I've heard Oklahoma Joes is good, but I haven't been there.

As interviewed by Huskers Illustrated's Lanny Holstein

Cook looks for Hall to play best volleyball down the stretch



Story By Bob Hamar • Photo by Joe Mixan

CECILIA HALL ALMOST ENDED UP AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA BY ACCIDENT. HALL HAD NO INTENTIONS OF PLAYING COLLEGE VOLLEYBALL WHEN SHE WAS GROWING UP IN LINKOPING, SWEDEN, BUT SHE PLAYED HIGH SCHOOL VOLLEYBALL AND WAS PRETTY GOOD AT IT. HALL HADN'T EVEN THOUGHT ABOUT PLAYING COLLEGE VOLLEYBALL IN THE STATES UNTIL SHE TALKED WITH ONE OF HER COACHES.

Hall played for coach Karl Norden at Allebergsgymnasiyet High School in Linkoping where she was a three-time letterwinner in volleyball.

"He asked me if I'd be interested in coming here," Hall said. "I didn't know what I wanted to do after high school. I said, 'Sure, I'll check it out.' And then coach (John Cook) started emailing me. I came here and I loved it."

And that was that.

Hall was going to be a Husker volleyball player, and one with loads of potential.

"Cici to me is the prototype middle we need in the Big Ten," Cook said. "She can block. She can hit. She's big. She's really smooth moving. But for whatever reason Cici hasn't been getting it done in practice."

And she knew it.

It was kind of a slow start to the season for the 6-foot-3 Hall.

She started 30 of 33 matches as a sophomore in 2013,

2014 Nebraska Volleyball Schedule			
Date	Opponent	Location	Result
Aug. 23, 2014	Red-White Game	Devaney Center	White 3-1
AVCA Showcase			
Aug. 29, 2014	Florida State	Devaney Center	L, 3-1 (0-1)
Aug. 31, 2014	Stanford	Devaney Center	L, 3-0 (0-2)
Flyer-Raider Invite			
Sept. 5, 2014	Dayton	Dayton, Ohio	W, 3-0 (1-2)
Sept. 6, 2014	CSU-Bakersfield	Dayton, Ohio	W, 3-1 (2-2)
Sept. 6, 2014	Eastern Kentucky	Dayton, Ohio	W, 3-0 (3-2)
Ameritas Players	Challenge		
Sept. 12, 2014	Denver	Devaney Center	W, 3-0 (4-2)
Sept. 13, 2014	Colgate	Devaney Center	W, 3-0 (5-2)
Sept. 17, 2014	Creighton	Devaney Center	W, 3-1 (6-2)
Sept. 20, 2014	Texas	Devaney Center	L, 3-2 (6-3)
Sept. 24, 2014	Iowa *	Devaney Center	W, 3-0 (7-3)
Sept. 27, 2014	Iowa *	Iowa City, Iowa	W, 3-0 (8-3)
Oct. 3, 2014	Penn State *	Devaney Center	W, 3-1 (9-3)
Oct. 4, 2014	Ohio State *	Devaney Center	L, 3-2 (9-4)
Oct. 10, 2014	Michigan State *	East Lansing, MI	W, 3-1 (10-4)
Oct. 11, 2014	Michigan *	Ann Arbor, MI	L, 3-0 (10-5)
Oct. 15, 2014	Northwestern *	Devaney Center	W, 3-0 (11-5)
Oct. 18, 2014	Illinois *	Devaney Center	L, 3-1 (11-6)
Oct. 22, 2014	Minnesota *	Minneapolis	W, 3-2 (12-6)
Oct. 26, 2014	Wisconsin *	Madison, Wis.	L, 3-0 (12-7)
Oct. 31, 2014	Rutgers *	Piscataway, N.J.	W, 3-0 (13-7)
Nov. 1, 2014	Maryland *	College Park, Md.	W, 3-0 (14-7)
Nov. 5, 2014	Purdue *	Devaney Center	TBA
Nov. 8, 2014	Indiana *	Devaney Center	TBA
Nov. 12, 2014	Michigan State *	Devaney Center	TBA
Nov. 16, 2014	Maryland *	Devaney Center	TBA
Nov. 19, 2014	Indiana *	Bloomington, Ind.	TBA
Nov. 22, 2014	Michigan *	Devaney Center	TBA
Nov. 26, 2014	Illinois *	Champaign, Ill.	TBA
Nov. 29, 2014	Penn State *	State College	TBA
NCAA Tourney			
Dec. 4-6, 2014	TBD	College Sites	TBA
Dec. 13-14, 2014	TBD	Regional Sites	TBA
Dec. 18, 2014	TBD - Semifinals	Oklahoma City, OK	TBA
Dec. 20, 2014	Championship	Oklahoma City	6:35 p.m.

but this year had started 13 of 19 matches as of Oct. 28 and was second in kills by a middle blocker behind Meghan Haggerty

"I started out pretty slow," Hall said. "I did not compete as well as I should have, but I think it's getting better now. I'm more confident. That's all it is. I mean practice can

go well, and then come game time you can get a little nervous.

"Plus especially like it's Nebraska and we have to prove ourselves. That gets to me sometimes."

Hall is feeling better about things now. The Huskers have been struggling to make that connection between setter

Mary Pollmiller and the middles all year.

Cook has used four different middles this season with Melanie Keil and Kira Larson also seeing playing time along with Hall and Haggerty.

"I think it's constantly getting better," Hall said of that connection with Pollmiller. "You need a trust between the setters and the middles. We've been changing up the sets kind of, which I think maybe isn't the best thing. We're kind of out of rhythm."

That's something Hall didn't expect to happen after the team performed well on a trip to China this past summer.

"Coach Cook right before that said 'I don't think we're going to win a game,'" Hall said. "And then we realized that we could play with them. That gave us that extra fire. I think we played really more consistent in China than we have this fall."

"We've had some good games this fall but then we've had bad games."

The Huskers have taken their lumps in the tough Big Ten Conference, but they do own a win over defending national champion Penn State. Hall said they just need to play with more consistency down the stretch.

"I think if we do that, we can definitely play with anyone," Hall said. "We got beat by Stanford, but if we're playing like we did in the last games against Minnesota (when the Huskers rallied to win after losing the first two sets), we will definitely have a chance to go all the way."

"They compare us to the 2009 team. They had a pretty rough start and lost a lot of matches. It all just matters what you do at the end. If we can just play at that level we can be unstoppable."

NEBRASKA VOLLEYBALL NOTEBOOK

Compiled by Bob Hamar • Photo by Mitch Otto

HUSKERS STILL LOOKING FOR CONSISTENCY

Not much had changed as the Huskers headed into the second half of the Big Ten Conference season. Throughout the first half, coach John Cook was looking for more consistent play. He's still looking for it.

"We've done some good things," Cook said. "We've played at a high level too. We were able to beat Penn State. Penn State waxed Wisconsin. This conference is tough. Again, we're very close."

The Huskers closed the first half of the Big Ten slate on the road by beating Minnesota and getting swept by Wisconsin. The Huskers rebounded from a 2-0 deficit to beat the Gophers, but the Badgers, who advanced to the NCAA national championship match last year before losing to Penn State, were too much.

But looking at Wisconsin gives Cook hope for the rest of this season.

"Wisconsin (last year) was the same place we are right now," Cook said. "And we just waxed them up there. That's why I said teams make a decision. Are they going to get better or are they going to stay the same or feel sorry for themselves for getting beat 3-0? That's our choice."

Cook said leadership will be a key from the top down as the season winds to a close.

"It starts with me. It goes to Mary (Pollmiller), our captains and throughout the rest of the team," Cook said. "It's the whole package. It's making the choice to come in and how hard we're going to work the next five weeks."

FOLLOWING THE GAME PLAN

That loss to Wisconsin bothered Cook. The biggest thing may have been that the Huskers didn't follow their game plan at all.

The plan was to hit the ball away from libero Taylor Morey, but she had 29 digs for the match. The other part of the plan was to control Wisconsin setter Lauren Carlini, but she had a career-high nine kills while hitting .643 with 34 assists,



Amber Rolfzen puts up a block against Creighton earlier this season.

seven digs and five blocks.

"You don't want to play into their strengths and that's exactly what we did," Cook said. "Our game plan was this: Don't let Carlini have a big night. She had a career night. Don't let the libero get a lot of digs. She had a career night. So they forced us to play their game. What's disappointing for me is we didn't trust our game plan and execute it."

HUSKERS APPEAR TO HAVE MANAGEABLE SCHEDULE

The second half of the Big Ten schedule looks a little better to Cook. The

Huskers have some tough matches – including a road trip to Illinois and Penn State to end the regular season – but it's not as formidable as the first half of the Big Ten slate.

While the Huskers played four rated teams in the first half of the season, they only face three in the second half. They also have matches against bottom-tier Big Ten teams Rutgers, Maryland twice and Indiana twice.

"I think our schedule if you look at it is a little bit more manageable in the second half of the Big Ten," Cook said. "Hopefully we can take advantage of that and see if we can get these guys headed in the right direction."

Cook still says the Huskers are close to being a top-five team.

"Again, we're very close," Cook said. "Our loss to Ohio State really hurt us and we didn't play well at Michigan. Illinois, we could have won that match. The test is can we get Illinois the second round? Can we go compete at Penn State at the end? Those are great challenges for us."

YOUNG HUSKERS

Cook noticed on the television replay of the match against Wisconsin that the announcers pointed out one important fact. Wisconsin has seven seniors on its roster compared to just one (Pollmiller) for the Huskers.

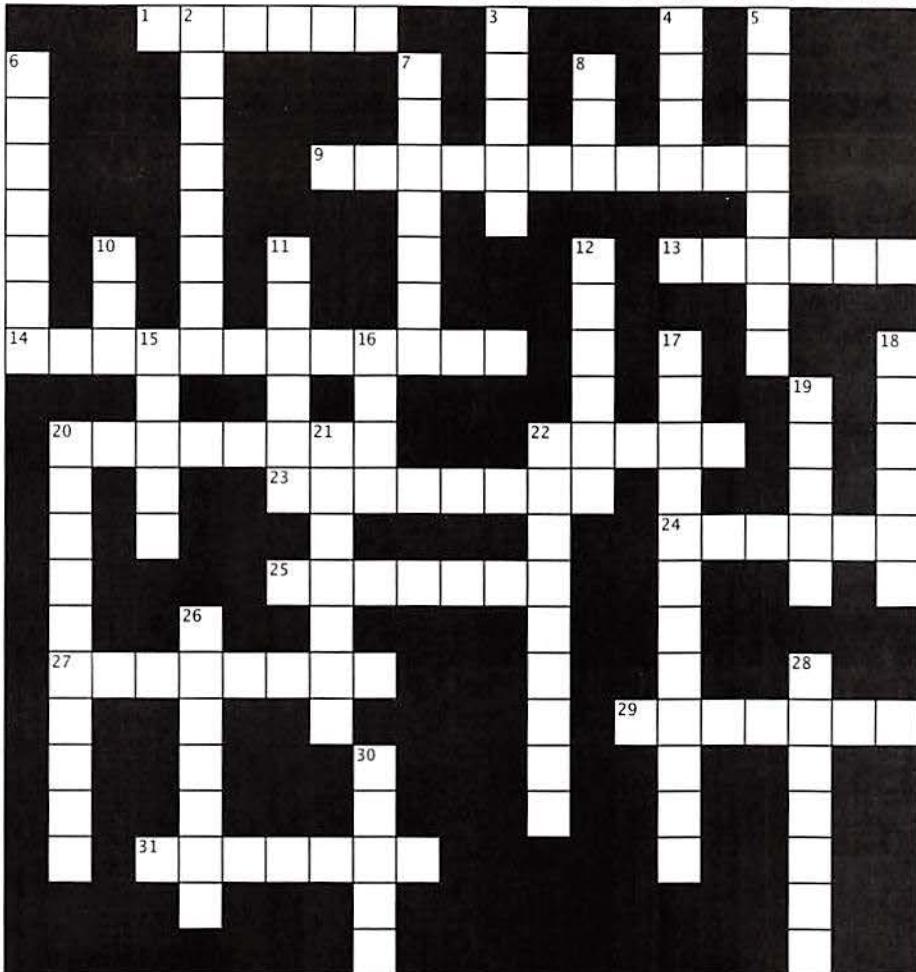
Cook said that may be at the heart of his team's performance this season, particularly when it comes to the passing woes the Huskers had against the Badgers.

"I don't want to keep blaming it on that, but that is a sign of immaturity," Cook said. "We're probably as talented if not more talented than Wisconsin, but their libero and setter are really good. Carlini makes players better than they really are."

Cook said that match against Wisconsin also showed something else.

"We saw what a really good ballhandling team does and how effective that was," Cook said.

NOVEMBER 15 CROSSWORD PUZZLE



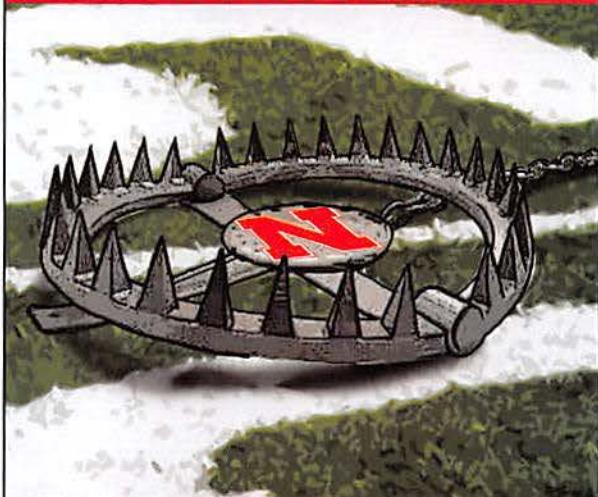
ACROSS

1. Assistant Athletic Director for Football
9. 2016 non-conference opponent
13. Wide receivers coach
14. 2015 non-conference opponent
20. Wisconsin school color
22. Wears No. 74 (offense)
23. Corey Cooper's home state
24. Wisconsin Heisman Trophy winner (1954)
25. Wisconsin campus location
27. Wisconsin head coach
29. Wears No. 7 (defense)
31. Quarterfinalist for 2014 Lott IMPACT Trophy

DOWN

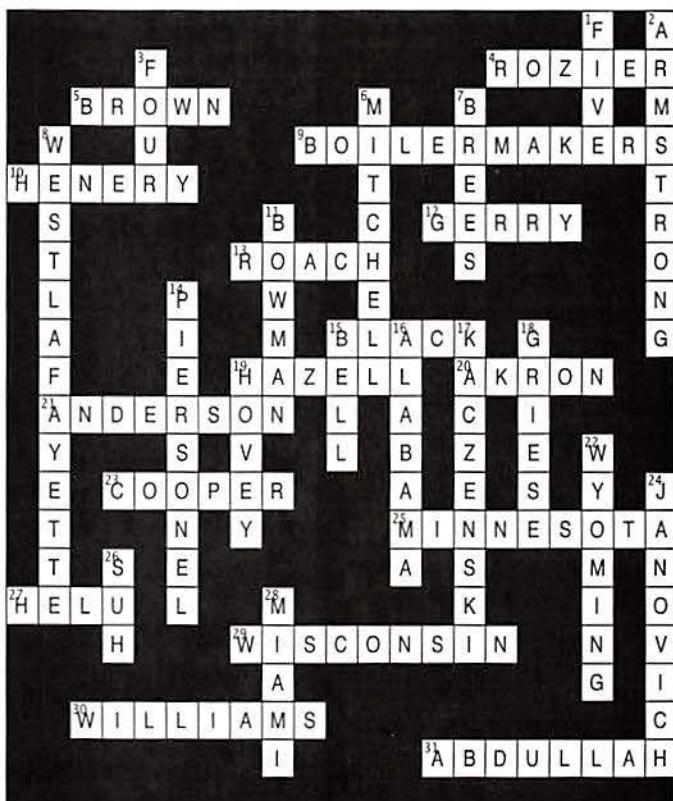
2. Ranks No. 2 on Big Ten's career all-purpose yardage list
3. Wisconsin Heisman Trophy winner (1999)
4. Nov. 28 opponent
5. Leading tackler vs. Rutgers
6. Wisconsin nickname
7. Former Wisconsin head coach
8. Linebackers coach
10. Defeated Wisconsin in 2014 opener
11. Wears No. 56 (offense)
12. Wears No. 41 (defense)
15. Number of Ameer Abdullah touchdowns vs. Rutgers
16. School record-holder in career receptions
17. City for Big Ten Championship game
18. 1972 Lombardi Award winner
19. Ex-Husker defensive lineman now with Houston Texans
20. Wisconsin's bowl game after 2013 season
21. Former Wisconsin head coach who played at NU
22. Nov. 22 opponent
26. Ex-Husker defensive back now with New England Patriots
28. 1994 Outland Trophy winner
30. Intercepted pass vs. Rutgers

Prognostications of Joe Husker



The Badgers get a nasty surprise when the Huskers come to Madison.

NOVEMBER 1 CROSSWORD SOLUTION



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